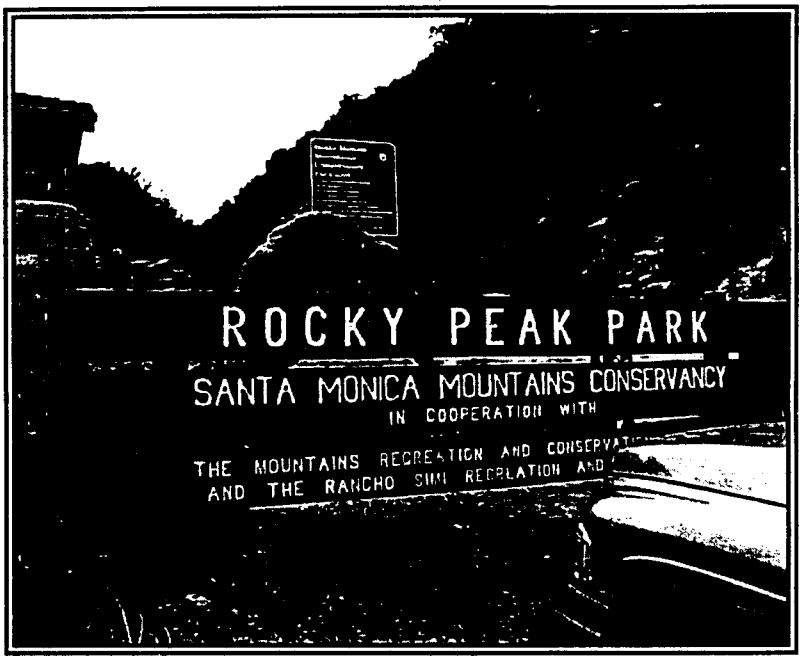
Environmental Assessment/ Initial Study

State Route 118 (Ronald Reagan Freeway)
Rocky Peak Road Eastbound Off- and Westbound On-Ramps



In the City of Simi Valley,
from 3.3 km east of Kuehner Drive
to 3.5 km west of Topanga Canyon Road (SR 27)

07-VEN-118-KP R51.5/52.3 (PM R32.0/32.5)
EA: 223800

May 2002

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07-VEN-118-KP 51.3/52.3
(PM 32.0/32.5)
EA: 223800

In the County of Ventura, improvements are proposed at the Route 118/Rocky Peak Interchange from 3.3 KM east of Kuehner Drive to 3.5 KM west of Topanga Canyon Blvd. (SR 27)

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT/ INITIAL STUDY

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, Public Resources Code
(Federal) 42 USC 4332(2)(C)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Federal Highway Administration,
THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation, and
VENTURA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Ronald Kosinski

Ronald J. Kosinski
Deputy District Director
Division of Environmental Planning
California Department of Transportation

May 2, 2002
Date of Approval

Cesar E Perez

Cesar Perez
Senior Transportation Engineer
Federal Highway Administration

5/14/02
Date of Approval

State of California
Department of Transportation

SCH Number:
07-VEN-118-KP 51.5/52.3
(PM 32.0/32.5)

Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (The Department) proposes to construct the eastbound off-ramp and westbound on-ramp of State Route 118 at the Rocky Peak Road Overcrossing. Each ramp would be constructed as a single-lane ramp with the off-ramp transitioning to two lanes at the ramp terminus, and a ramp-meter would be installed on the westbound on-ramp.

Determination

Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study, and has determined from this study that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

- There will be no significant adverse effects on topography or erosion as a result of this project.
- Energy or use of natural resources will not be significantly affected by this project.
- Floodplains, wetlands, and water quality will not be significantly affected by this project.
- No significant impacts on agriculture, land use, or anticipated growth will originate from this project.
- No significant impacts on economic stability, employment, traffic, or parking will result from this project.
- Neighborhoods, schools, public or recreational facilities, public utilities, or heritage and scenic resources will not be adversely affected by this project.
- There will be no adverse effects on archaeological, historical, or cultural resources, parkland, recreational or scenic areas.
- There will be no adverse effects on geology and soils, air quality, noise, visual, and property displacement impacts.
- Implementation of mitigation measures will reduce potential biological impacts to a less than significant level.

_____ _____

Ronald J. Kosinski — Date
Deputy District Director
District 07, Division of Environmental Planning
California Department of Transportation

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Chapter 1 Purpose and Need

1.1 Introduction

State Route (SR) 118 is an interregional highway and freeway that traverses the unincorporated areas of Ventura and Los Angeles Counties and the cities of San Buenaventura (Ventura), Moorpark, Simi Valley, Los Angeles and San Fernando. It is 46 mi. (75 km) in length, of which 32 mi. (52 km) are in Ventura County and the remaining 14 mi. (23 km) are in Los Angeles County (see Figure 1-1, Project Vicinity Map below).

The California Department of Transportation (The Department), Caltrans District 7, proposes to construct the westbound (WB) on-ramp and the eastbound (EB) off-ramp for State Route 118 (SR 118) at the Rocky Peak Road Overcrossing. The limits of the project are from 2.05 mi (3.3 km) east of Kuehner Drive to 2.17 mi (3.5 km) west of Topanga Canyon Boulevard, located in the City of Simi Valley, County of Ventura (see Figure 1-2, Project Location Map on the following page). The proposed ramps would complete the west half of the interchange of SR 118 and Rocky Peak Road.

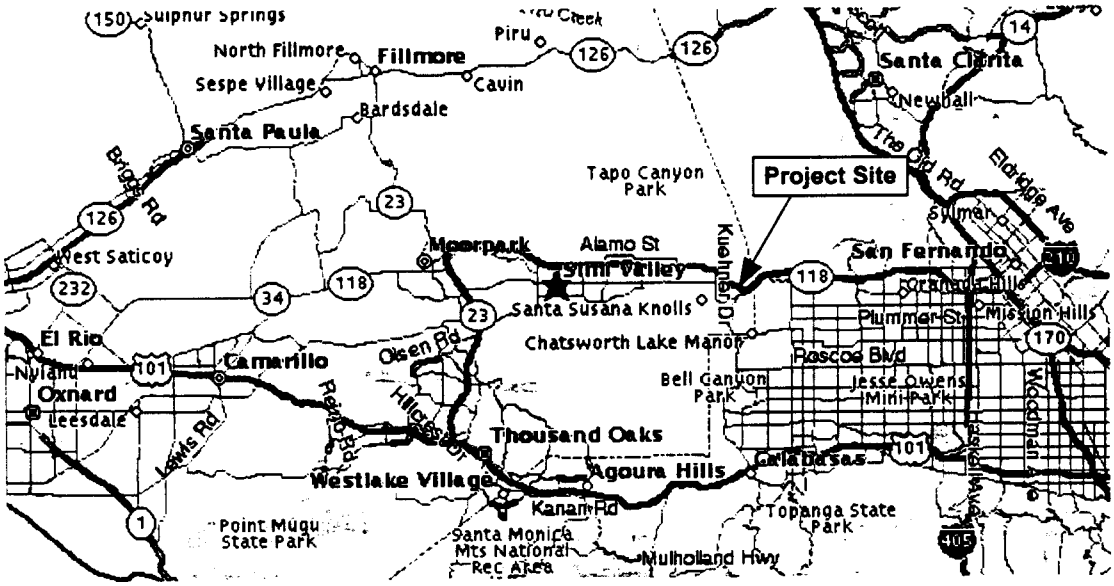
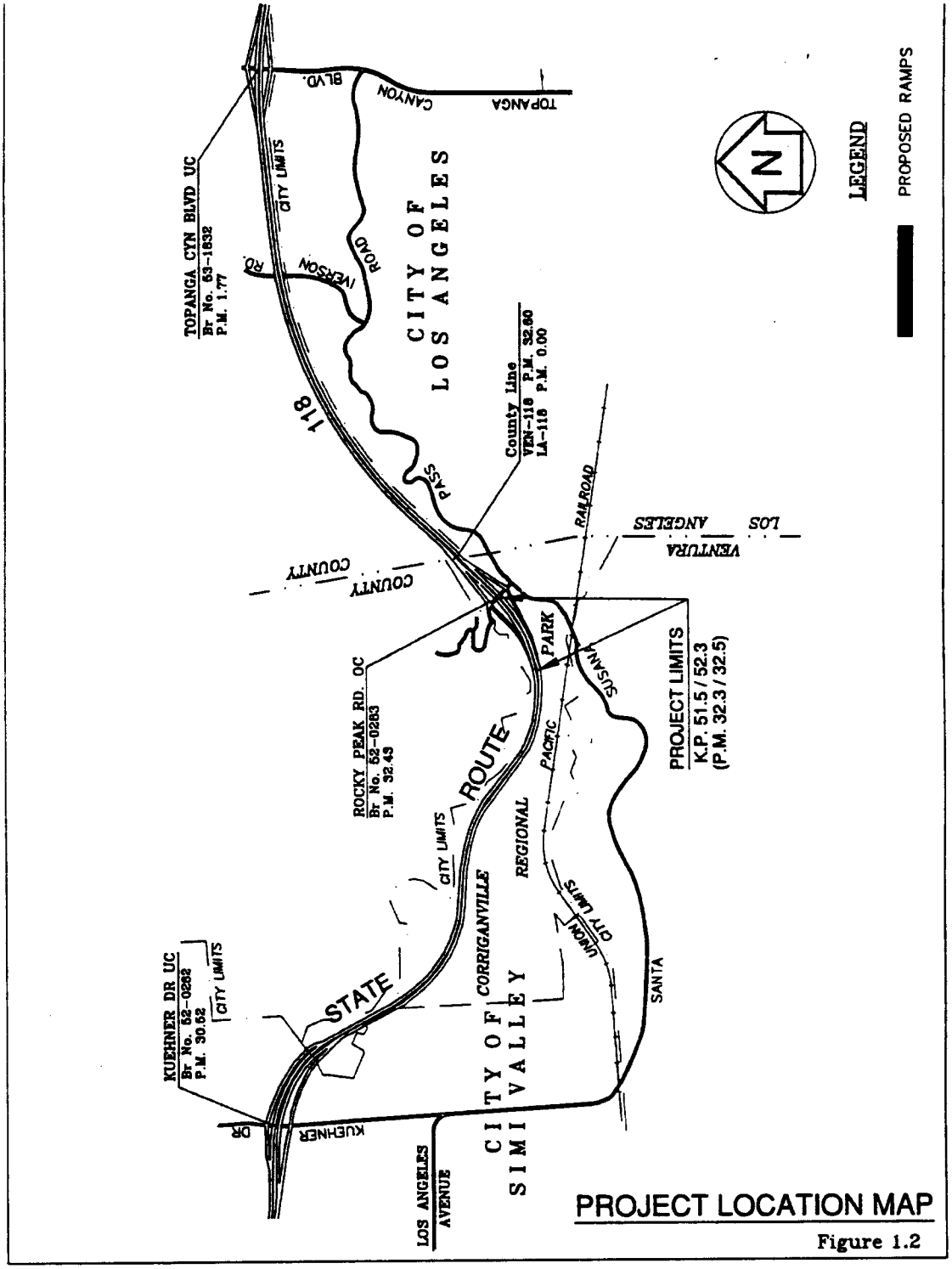


Figure 1-1 Project Vicinity Map

Figure 1-2 Project Location Map



1.2 Purpose and Need

Kuehner Drive, west of Rocky Peak Road, and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, east of Rocky Peak Road, have full interchanges on SR 118. Currently, emergency vehicles responding to accidents between Kuehner Drive and Rocky Peak Road on the westbound (WB) SR 118 have to travel eastbound (EB) on SR 118 to the Topanga Canyon Boulevard exit and return on WB SR 118 to access the site. The proposed project is intended to achieve the following goals:

- Improve safety
- Reduce the response time for emergency vehicles responding to calls on WB SR 118
- Allow commuters to use Santa Susana Pass Road as an alternate route in case of freeway closures
- Conform to state, regional and local plans and policies

1.3 Project Background

Rocky Peak Road Overcrossing was built in 1968 along with its east half interchange on SR 118. The west half interchange was rough graded and gates were placed across the entrances to deny any ramp access. The overcrossing structure connects to the two-lane, Santa Susana Pass Road on the south side of the freeway and dead-ends into a fire road on the north side. Currently, a "STOP" sign controls the Rocky Peak Road/Santa Susana Road intersection.

A letter dated January 25, 2001, from Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) to Caltrans District 7 Project Management Office requested that this project move forward with the SR 118 Widening - Tapo Canyon Road to the Los Angeles County Line project (EA: 116791). The SR 118 Widening project is scheduled to begin construction in August 2003.

1.4 Project Description

Caltrans District 7 proposes to construct the WB on-ramp and the EB off-ramp for SR 118 at Rocky Peak Road Overcrossing. The construction of these ramps would bring it to a full interchange. Each ramp would be constructed as a single-lane ramp with

the off-ramp transitioning to two lanes at the ramp terminus. A ramp-meter would be installed on the WB on-ramp.

The Transportation Analysis and Los Angeles Regional Transportation Study (LARTS) of Caltrans using the LARTS travel model determined existing and future traffic projections (see Table 1-1). Currently, the six-lane section of SR 118 at Rocky Peak Road is carrying approximately 107,000 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volume with a projected ADT of 286,800 for the year 2025. The 2025 ADT forecast for the proposed ramps is 980 for the WB on-ramp and 929 for the EB off-ramp.

The accident history for the existing area was reviewed using Caltrans Traffic Accident Surveillance and Analysis System (TASAS) for the 36-month period from July 1997 through June 2000. The accident history is summarized in Table 1-2.

Table 1-1 Traffic Projections - 2025

LOCATION	Existing ADT	Year 2025 ADT
SR118-R30.8/R32.6 (mainline)	107,000	286,8000
Existing EB On-Ramp ADT @ Rocky Peak Rd.	1200	1581
Existing WB Off-Ramp ADT @ Rocky Peak Rd.	910	1303
Future EB Off-Ramp ADT @ Rocky Peak Rd.	*	929
Future WB On-Ramp ADT @ Rocky Peak Rd.	*	980

Source: Transportation Analysis and Los Angeles Regional Transportation Study (LARTS)

Table 1-2 TASAS from July 1997 to June 2000

LOCATION Limits: KP(PM)	TOTAL No. of accidents	ACTUAL ACCIDENT RATES (million vehicles/kilometer)			AVERAGE ACCIDENT RATES (million vehicles/kilometer)		
		Fatalities	Fatalities + Injuries	Total	Fatalities	Fatalities + Injuries	Total
EB - SR 118 (30.52/32.53)	84	2	0.19	0.70	0.016	0.33	0.82
WB - SR 118 (30.52/32.53)	93	2	0.26	0.78	0.016	0.33	0.82
EB On-Ramp @ Rocky Peak Road	2	0	0.47	0.94	0.004	0.13	0.34
WB Off-Ramp @ Rocky Peak Road	2	0	0	1.25	0.009	0.27	0.71

Source: Caltrans Traffic Accident Surveillance and Analysis System

According to the TASAS, the accidental rate during the last three years on the EB and WB mainline of SR 118 is lower than the normal rate. The main reason for these accidents is speeding, and most of them were either hit-object or rear end collisions.

There were only two accidents on each on/off ramp at Rocky Peak Road during the past three years even though the actual accident rates appear to be higher than the averages. All accidents were either hit-object or rear-end collisions, and they all occurred at the ramp intersections.

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Chapter 2 Alternatives

2.1 Alternative Development Process

During the development of all projects, alternatives are considered to the extent necessary to minimize costs and adverse environmental impacts, and to maximize public benefits. Value analysis is the preferred method of developing alternatives, using a systematic application of analytical techniques to identify a project's function, identify alternatives, and analyze alternatives to identify the one that fully meets the project's function.

2.2 Project Alternatives

The proposed project is the completion of a full interchange at Rocky Peak Road on SR 118. The alternatives considered are the no build alternative and the build alternative.

2.2.1 Alternative 1 - No Build

Alternative 1 (No Build) assumes no improvements, modifications or changes would be made to this interchange. There would be no ramps built on the west half of SR 118/Rocky Peak Road interchange. The configuration of the existing rough graded ramps will remain the same. This alternative would avoid the environmental impacts associated with construction and operation of the build. Cross-sections for Alternative 1 are shown in Figure 2-1.

This alternative is not consistent with local and regional plans. If the existing facility remains unimproved, the response time for emergency vehicles would not improve and could become a life-threatening situation. Therefore, safety would continue to be compromised.

2.2.2 Alternative 2 - Build

Alternative 2 (Build) involves the construction of WB on and EB off-ramps on the west half of SR 118/Rocky Peak Road interchange. The completion of Alternative 2 would result in a full interchange at SR 118/Rocky Peak Road.

The design of the ramps follows the criteria and policies in Caltrans Highway Design Manual (see website: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/oppd/). Each ramp would be constructed as a single-lane ramp with the off-ramp transition to two-lanes at the ramp terminus. The Average Daily Traffic (ADT) forecast for 2025 does not warrant any additional lanes. A ramp-meter would be installed on the WB on-ramp. The cross-sections for Alternative 2 are shown in Figure 2-2 and the design layout of the ramps is shown in Figure 2-3 on the following pages.

An exception is requested from the Highway Design Mandatory Standards (HDM Index 504.3(2)) for the minimum distance between ramp intersections and local road intersections. The distance between the existing EB on-ramp and the proposed EB off-ramp to Santa Susana Pass Road/Rocky Peak Road intersection is 121 feet (37 m). The minimum distance specified in the standards is 410 feet (125 m).

An exception to the Highway Design Mandatory Standards was made because increasing the distance to meet the standards would result in the following:

- It would require right-of-way acquisition
- Massive rock excavation would occur
- It would create major environmental impacts
- Additional construction cost of $5.4 million would be necessary.

Figure 2-1 Alternative 1 (No Build)– Layout

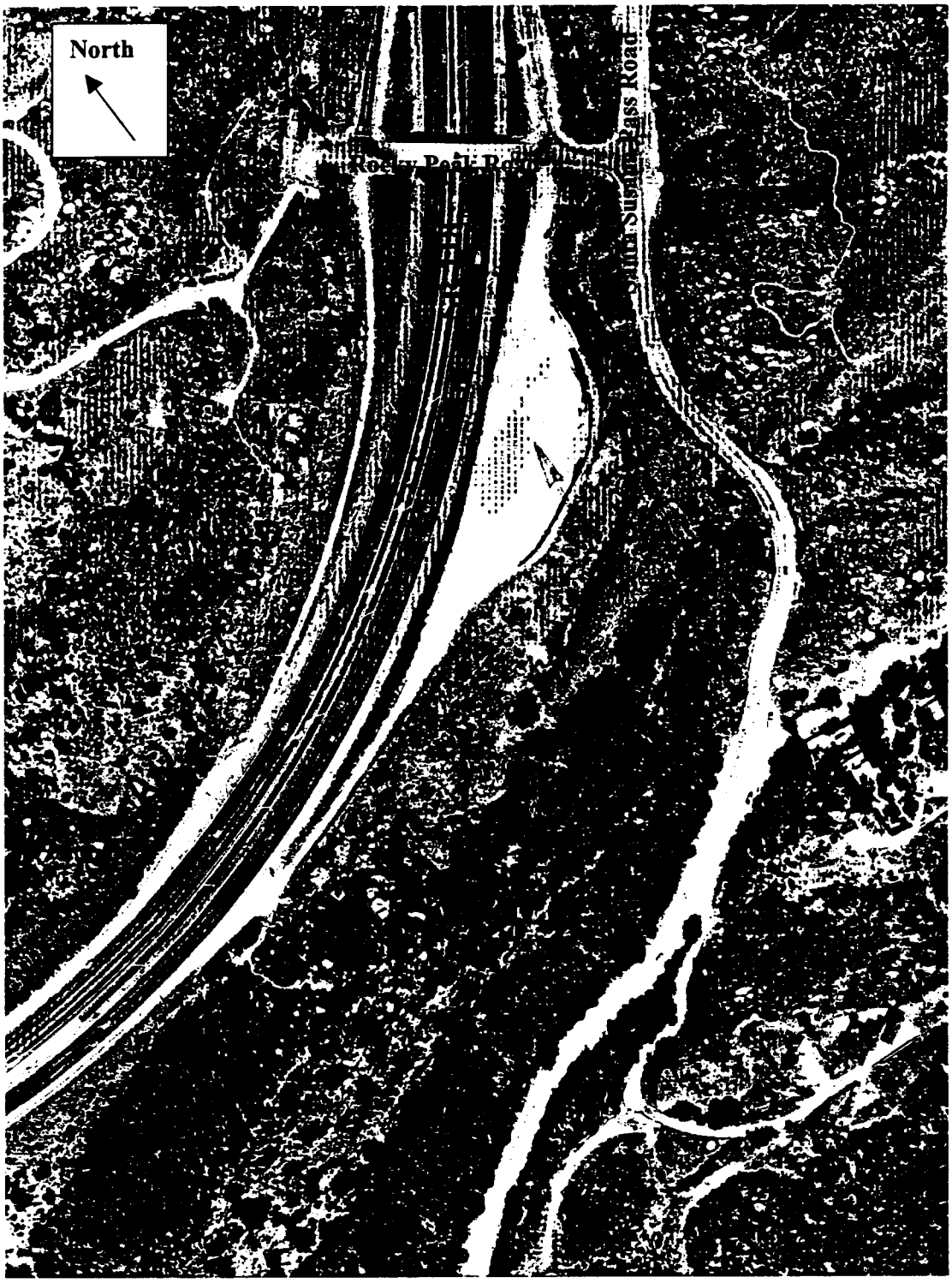


Figure 2-2 Alternative 2 (Build)– Layout

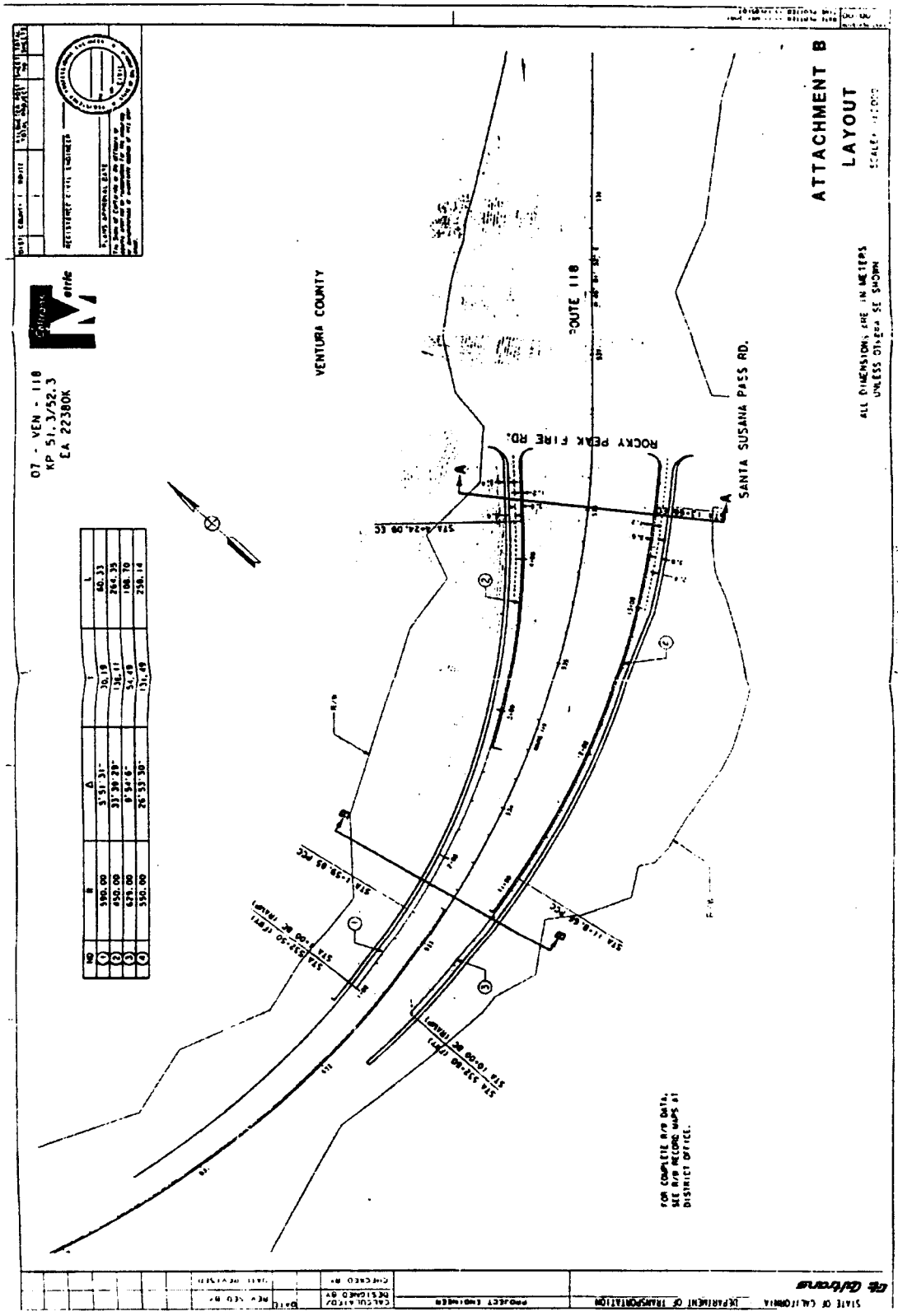
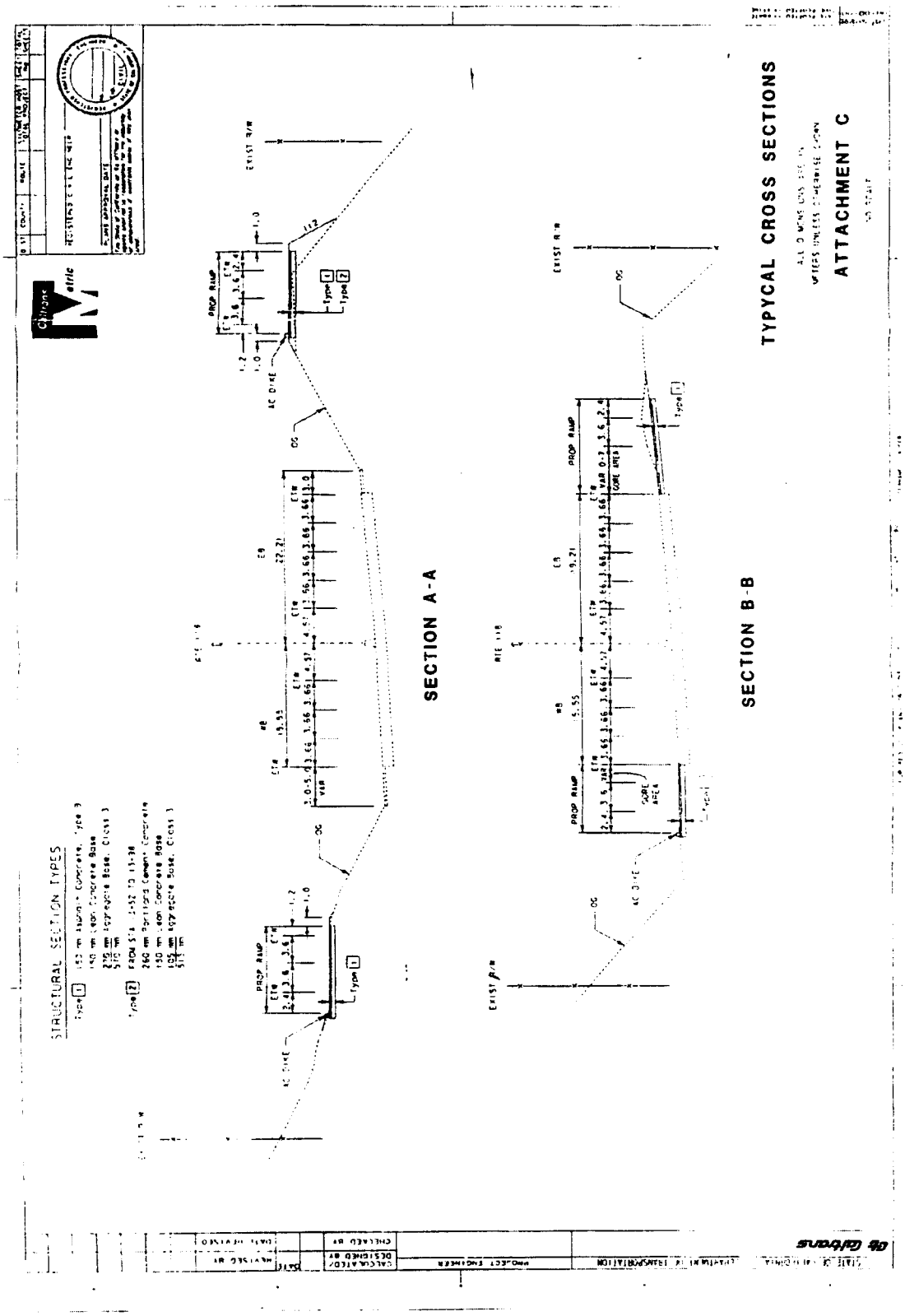


Figure 2-3 Alternative 2 (Build) - Cross Sections



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Chapter 3 Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Mitigation

3.1 Technical Studies, Plans and Reports

Technical studies were conducted and collected to provide background data and to assist in evaluating the environmental consequences of the proposed project. The following studies, plans and reports are incorporated into the document.

- Traffic Noise Study Report (January 2002)
- Geocon, Site Investigation Report (January 1999)
- Accident Analysis (June 2000)
- Traffic Forecast Analysis (April 2001)
- Exceptions to Mandatory Design Standards (July 2001)
- Negative Archaeological Survey Report (October 2001)
- Negative Historical Property Survey Report (November 2001)
- Natural Environment Study Report (November 2001)
- Physical Environment Report (October 2001)
- City of Simi Valley General Plan (October 1988)
- Ventura County General Plan
- Storm Water Unit (NPDES) Report (February 2002)
- Missing Linkages: Restoring Connectivity to the California Landscape
- Aesthetic Report (November 2001)
- Simi Valley Fire Station 43Memo

The studies are available for review at the following location:

Caltrans District 07
Division of Environmental Planning
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Simi Valley Library
2969 Tapo Canyon Road
Simi Valley 93063

3.2 Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

This checklist was used to identify physical, biological, social and economic factors that might be impacted by the proposed project. In many cases the background studies performed in connection with this project clearly indicate that the project would not affect a particular item. In so doing, the checklist achieves the important statutory

goal of integrating the requirements of CEQA with the environmental requirements of other laws.

Title 14 California Code of Regulations Section 15064 provides the basic guidance to lead agencies in determining the significance of a project's effects or requiring mitigation to reduce the effects to less than significant in order to prepare a negative declaration. The checklist provides optional tools to assist Caltrans in determining the significance of particular effects.

Under NEPA, a proposed federal action must have the potential to significantly affect the quality of the environment. Whether a proposed action significantly affects the quality of the human environment is determined by considering the context and intensity of the action and its effects. 40CFR1508.27.

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agriculture Resources	☐ Air Quality
☒ Biological Resources	☐ Cultural Resources	☐ Geology /Soils
☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials	☐ Hydrology / Water Quality	☐ Land Use / Planning
☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Noise	☐ Population / Housing
☐ Public Services	☐ Recreation	☐ Transportation/Traffic
☐ Utilities / Service Systems	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance	

3.3 Environmental Checklist

It is noted that since this document is intended to serve as the environmental document for federal as well as state actions, it must comply with both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and CEQA. In some instances, CEQA significance thresholds are more stringent than federal impact criteria. This checklist is used to determine impacts. Based on federal criteria, it has been determined that this project would not result in any significant unavoidable impacts that would affect the quality of the human environment under NEPA. The use of the word "significant" in the following section is for CEQA purposes only and does not apply to NEPA.

CEQA

3.2.1 Aesthetics: Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Due to the subjectivity of aesthetics, the value of visual resources is usually considered at a local level and decisions are based upon community values. The County of Ventura provides guidelines for the development and protection of scenic resources in its Goals, Policies and Programs portion of the Ventura County General Plan (County of Ventura May 24, 1988). The relevant goals and policies include:

a. Goal 1.7.1.1 Preserve and protect significant open views and visual resources of the county.

b. Policy 1.7.2.1 Discretionary development that would significantly degrade, alter, or obscure public views and visual resources shall be prohibited unless no feasible mitigation measures are available and the decision making body determines that there are overriding consideration.

The proposed project involves the construction of the EB off-ramp and WB on-ramp on SR 118 at Rocky Peak Road Overcrossing. The initial grades for these ramps were constructed with the first half of the interchange in 1968. Each ramp would be constructed as a single-lane ramp with the off-ramp transitioning to two lanes at the ramp terminus. A ramp-meter would be installed on the westbound on-ramp. Due to the nature of the proposed project, no adverse aesthetic impacts would occur.

Mitigation: Existing native species should remain where feasible. New landscaping should consist of a native seed and erosion control hydroseed application to disturbed slopes

Result After Mitigation: There would be no residual potential for adverse effects on the environment related to asthetic resources.

Resources: Asthetic Report, November 2001

	CEQA			
3.2.2 Agricultural Resources: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland.	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Federal, state, and county level mechanisms exist to preserve agriculture. At the federal level, impacts of federally funded projects on farmland are reviewed through the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA). This federal review satisfies the requirements of the State's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). At the County level, guidelines and multiple programs exist, including the County General Plan and Initial Study Assessment Guidelines, Land Conservation Act (LCA) contracts, and greenbelt agreements. Other programs such as water conservation measures, the Right to Farm Ordinance, and the Save Open Space and Agricultural

Resources (SOAR) Ordinance also exist to protect farming resources in the region. The FPPA is described below.

There is no agricultural land located within, adjacent to or in the vicinity of the project area that would be impacted by the project.

Mitigation: None required.

References: 1988 Simi Valley General Plan

	CEQA			
3.2.3 Air Quality: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions, which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Federal and state standards have been established for ozone, CO, nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), particulates less than 10 microns in diameter (PM_{10}), and lead. California has also set standards for sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, vinyl chloride, and visibility reducing particles. Table 3-1 provides a summary of the state and national ambient air quality standards.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) is the federal agency designated to administer air quality regulation, while the California Air Resources Board (CARB) is the state equivalent in the California Environmental Protection Agency. Local control in air quality management is provided by the CARB through county-level Air Pollution Control Districts (APCDs). The CARB has established air quality standards and is responsible for the control of mobile emission sources, while the local APCDs are responsible for enforcing standards and regulating stationary sources.

No adverse air quality impacts are expected during construction. The ramps have already been roughly graded and only minimal additional grading is required. In addition, no significant disruption of traffic during construction is expected. The proposed project is identified in the federally approved (September 25, 2001) 2000/01-2005/06 Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP) and conforms to the requirements of the federal Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAAs) of 1990. This project has not been altered in design concept or scope from that described in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). The project is consistent with the Ventura Air Quality Management Plan (VAQMP) because it would not induce growth but instead would accommodate traffic that Ventura County's growth forecasts predict.

Mitigation:

- Caltrans Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be implemented.
- All clearing, grubbing, grading, earth moving, or excavation activities shall cease during periods of high winds to prevent excessive amounts of fugitive dust.
- All trucks that haul excavated or graded material off site shall comply with State Vehicle Code Section 23114.
- All active portions of the site and unpaved on-site roads shall be periodically watered with environmentally safe dust suppressants to prevent excessive amounts of dust.
- Areas disturbed by clearing, grading, earth moving or excavation operations shall be minimized to prevent excessive amounts of fugitive dust.
- On-site vehicle speed shall not exceed 15 miles per hour.
- Construction equipment engines shall be maintained in good condition and in proper tune as per manufacturers' specifications.

Result After Mitigation: There would be no residual potential for adverse effects on the environment related to air quality. No further mitigation would be necessary or required.

References: Physical Environmental Report, October 2001; CAAAs of 1990; Ventura AQMP

Table 3-1 State and Federal Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards [1]		Federal Standards [2]		
		Concentration [3]	Method [4]	Primary [3,5]	Secondary [3,6]	Method [7]
Ozone (O_3)	1 Hour	0.09 ppm (180 µg/m³)	Ultraviolet Photometry	0.12 ppm (235 µg/m³)	Same as Primary Standard	Ethylene Chemilumin-escence
	8 Hour	-		0.08 ppm (157 µg/m³)		
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM10)	Annual Geometric Mean	30 µg/m³	Size Selective Inlet Sampler ARB Method P (8/22/85)	-	Same as Primary Standard	Inertial Separation and Gravimetic Analysis
	24 Hour	50 µg/m³		150 µg/m³		
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	-		50 µg/m³		
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	24 Hour	No Separate State Standard		65 µg/m³	Same as Primary Standard	Inertial Separation and Gravimetic Analysis
	Annual Arithmetic Mean			15 µg/m³		
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	8 Hour	9.0 ppm (10 mg/m³)	Non-dispersive Infrared Photometry (NDIR)	9.0 ppm (10 mg/m³)	None	Non-dispersive Infrared Photometry (NDIR)
	1 Hour	20 ppm (23 mg/m³)		35 ppm (40 mg/m³)		
	8 Hour (Lake Tahoe)	6 ppm (7 mg/m³)		-		
Nirtogen Dioxide (NO_2)	Annual Arithmetic Mean	-	Gas Phase Chemiluminescence	0.053 ppm (100 µg/m³)	Same as Primary Standard	Gas Phase Chemilumin-escence
	1 Hour	0.25 ppm (470 µg/m³)		-		
Lead	30 days average	15 µg/m³	AIHL, Method 54 (12/74) Atomic Absorption	-	-	High Volume Sampler and Atomic Absorption
	Calendar Quarter	-		1.5 µg/m³	Same as Primary Standard	
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)	Annual Arithmetic Mean	-	Fluorescence	0.030 ppm (80 µg/m³)	-	Pararosoaniline
	24 Hour	0.04 ppm (105 µg/m³)		0.14 ppm (365 µg/m³)	-	
	3 Hour	-		-	0.5 ppm (1300 µg/m³)	
	1 Hour	0.25 ppm (655 µg/m³)		-	-	
Visibility Reducing Particles	8 Hour (10 am to 6 pm, PST)	In sufficient amount to produce an extinction coefficient of 0.23 per kilometer – visibility of ten miles or more (0.07 – 30 miles or more for Lake Tahoe) due to particles when the relative humidity is less than 70 %. Method: ARB Method V (8/18/89).		No Federal Standards		
Sulfates	24 Hour	25 µg/m³	Turbidimetric Barium Sulfate – AIHL Method 61 (2/76)			
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 Hour	0.03 ppm (42 µg/m³)	Cadmium Hydroxide STRactan			

See footnotes on next page.....

Source: California Air Resources Board (1/25/99)

CEQA

3.2.4 Biological Resources:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less-Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Has a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Environmental Setting

The project site is located in the City of Simi Valley, Ventura County. The project area borders the Corriganville Regional Park (part of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District), Rocky Peak Park, a low density Urban Area, and undeveloped Ventura and Los Angeles County land. Other surrounding parks include Santa Susana Pass State Park, Chatsworth Park, White Oaks Park, Hialeah Springs, and Hummingbird Ranch. The habitat in the project area was identified as coastal sage scrub with some chaparral plants and an infestation of fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum)*. The topography in the area consists of the east-west ridgeline of the Santa Susana range, the Simi Hills, and a series of canyons to the southeast. The principal watershed systems in the area include Blind/Devil and Las Llajas canyons that flow into the San Fernando and Simi Valleys. The existing level of disturbance is limited to roadway infrastructure and a small amount of urban development. The area is surrounded by coastal sage scrub and chaparral habitat.

Important Biological Resources in the Project Area

Endangered or Threatened Vegetation

A field visit on March 15, 2001 revealed several native vegetation species in the direct project area. The habitat in the project area was identified as coastal sage scrub with some chaparral plants and an infestation of fountain grass. The removal of vegetation on the existing on/off ramp areas is proposed. An inventory of these plants has been completed to identify which species are present. The Santa Susana tarplant (*Deinandra minthornii*) and the Plummer's mariposa lily (*Calochortus plummerae*), listed by the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB), were not found in the project area. Further pre-construction surveys would be conducted one week prior to construction. If these species were found prior to construction, the California Department of Fish and Game and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service would be contacted to incorporate all appropriate mitigation measures to avoid impacts. A plant palette would be submitted to the Office of Landscaping to mitigate for native vegetation removal.

- **Santa Susana tarplant** (*Deinandra minthornii*): This species is not federally listed as an Endangered, Threatened or Species of Concern. This species is listed by the State as Rare.
- **Plummer's mariposa lily** (*Calochortus plummerae*): This species is not Federally or State listed as an Endangered, Threatened or Species of Concern.

Endangered or Threatened Animal Species

The CNDDB indicated two Federal and State Endangered or Threatened Species, the San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*) and the western spadefoot (*Scaphiopus hammondii*), in areas near the project site. Animal surveys conducted on August 10th, 2001 determined that there was no presence of the San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*) or the San Diego horned lizard *(Phrynosoma coranatum blainvillei*). Details of each survey are described below:

- **San Diego desert woodrat** (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*): This species is not Federally or State listed as an Endangered, Threatened or Species of Concern. Appropriate habitat associations include moderate to dense canopies, rock outcrops and rocky cliffs and slopes. In the areas of dense vegetation on the proposed eastbound off-ramp, the slope was deemed too steep and the noise levels were too high for the woodrat to be present. On the proposed westbound on-ramp, the vegetation is not very dense and does not provide the necessary characteristics for proper habitat.
- **San Diego horned lizard** (*Phrynosoma coranatum blainvillei*): This species is listed Federally as a Species of Concern. Under the State it is not listed as an Endangered, Threatened or Species of Concern. Appropriate habitat associations for the San Diego horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coranatum blainvillei*) include coastal sage scrub and chaparral in arid and semi-arid climate conditions with friable, rocky, or shallow sandy soils. The proposed eastbound off-ramp is largely made up of hard compacted soil. There was no sign of prey in the area. On the proposed westbound on-ramp, there is a narrow linear area of suitable habitat running along the north side of the ramp. This area however, is not extensive enough to support the horned lizard and there is no prey base in the area. A pre-construction survey would be required to ensure there is no presence.
- **Western spadefoot** (*Scaphiopus hammondii*): This species is not Federally or State listed as an Endangered, Threatened or Species of Concern. Appropriate habitat associations include grassland habitats with vernal pools for breeding and laying eggs. The project limits do not provide the necessary characteristics for proper habitat.

Wildlife Corridor

This area is part of an important wildlife corridor that connects the San Gabriel, Santa Susana, and Santa Monica Mountain ranges. California State Park representatives indicate that many native animals can be found in the area. This includes mule deer, bobcats, coyotes, gray fox, and ring-tailed cats among others. Wildlife movement occurs through Rocky Peak Road and a tunnel located 2000 (+/- 500) feet west of Rocky Peak Road. This area provides wildlife movement between the Simi Hills to the south and the Santa Susana Mountains to the north. Important linkage areas include Corriganville Park, the Santa Susana Mountain State Park, Chatsworth Peak, Hummingbird Creek, and Box Canyon. The report, *Missing Linkages: Restoring Connectivity to the California Landscape,* recognizes Rocky Peak Road (Santa Susana Pass Linkage) as being a Connectivity Choke-Point Wildlife Corridor. This report defines a Connectivity Choke-Point as being,

> "A narrow, impacted, or otherwise tenuous habitat linkage connecting two or more habitat blocks ("core areas"). Choke points are essential to maintain landscape-level connectivity, but are particularly in danger of losing connectivity function. An example of a connectivity choke point is a narrow peninsula of habitat surrounded by a human-dominated matrix that connects

larger habitat blocks. Another example would be an underpass under a major roadway that is critical to allow animal movement between habitat blocks."

The report also states that this area has been identified as a Stewardship zone, which is an area of mixed land ownership with high habitat value. This report also listed this corridor in the top ten priority corridors in Southern California. The degree of threat or loss of this linkage was described as being probable, while the conservation opportunities are seen as possibly feasible. Simi Hills is described as the smallest of the corridor/habitat linkage systems, which makes it the most susceptible to additional losses of acreage or key habitat resources. A limiting factor for wildlife in the Rocky Peak area is the lack of a year round water supply.

Potential Project Impacts

- The removal of native plants within the project area (2.94 acres) would occur.
- The implementation of a new on and off ramp would most likely increase the traffic flows onto Rocky Peak Road and Santa Susana Pass. Considering that these two areas are used by wildlife, impacts to wildlife movement along the corridor would be expected.
- Due to the nature of the project, pollinator habitat and function would be impacted. Although impacts are long standing, this project would have only a minimal impact based on current ambient conditions. Therefore, this impact would be considered less than significant for this project.

Cumulative Impacts

There are several other developments that are scheduled in the surrounding area of SR 118. They include the Moorpark Highlands Specific Plan No. 2, the widening of Ventura Route 118, Alamos Canyon Underpass reopening, Chevron Industrial Development, Happy Camp Canyon Regional Park Housing Development, Widening of Tampa Avenue Off-ramp and addition of an auxiliary lane to west-bound lanes, Madera Road/Easy Street Intersection Widening, and Los Angeles Avenue/Tapo Street Intersection Widening.

The undeveloped area surrounding Rocky Peak Road is slowly becoming encroached upon by urban developments from Simi Valley as well as the San Fernando Valley. As described before, this linkage area can be described as a choke point specifically because of the surrounding urbanization. The other projects in the surrounding area heighten the cumulative impacts associated with wildlife movement. Alamos Canyon has also been characterized as an important wildlife corridor. The proposed underpass reopening would compromise if not altogether eliminate an important wildlife corridor. The compounded effect of the impacts to the Alamos Canyon corridor and the increased traffic levels that Ventura County's growth forecasts predict on Rocky Peak Road could result in significant impacts to wildlife movement in Simi Valley and San Fernando Valley. Of the seven wildlife corridors along SR 118 in Simi Valley, only two are open air corridors. Most of the wildlife corridors are

pipes/culverts. Rocky Peak Road is the only open air corridor that is an overpass. It has been stated that large carnivores are less likely to use culvert/pipe undercrossings as opposed to open-air underpasses/overcrossings. It is also recognized that large carnivores are especially sensitive to isolation or fragmentation and prefer areas of natural habitat/vegetation. This project would result in the elimination of the only overpass with suitable habitat surroundings in the area. These surrounding developments could cumulatively effect wildlife movement between Simi Valley and the San Fernando Valley.

Mitigation:

- The lance-leaf live-forever (*Dudleya lanceolata*) and the powdery live-forever (*Dudleya farinosa*) would be removed on the proposed westbound off-ramp and relocated before construction begins.
- The removal of native plants would be mitigated at an offsite location. Once designs are finalized, the determination of permanent and temporary impact areas would be defined. Once these areas are defined, onsite and possible offsite mitigation would be developed for both permanent and temporary vegetation impacts. A landscaping plan would be designed to address the permanent and temporary impacts to native vegetation.
- Removal of vegetation should not take place during the bird-nesting season from March 1st through September 1st.
- The construction of a wildlife corridor overpass structure would be required. A corridor study would be needed in unison with the National Parks Service to better define the required characteristics and the location of the structure. This structure should connect the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills habitats and should be vegetated with coastal sage scrub and chaparral. Caltrans is working with the National Park Service to develop a multi agency Wildlife Corridor Calibration Program.
- A monitoring program shall be proposed to track wildlife movement in the area.
- Pre-construction surveys would be required two weeks prior to construction to confirm that there are no protected species in the area.
- Pollinator Impacts: At this time there is no known mitigation for this impact because this is a recently articulated impact in literature.
- Nesting bird surveys would be required prior to construction.

Monitoring: Caltrans' Division of Environmental Planning shall monitor all mitigation until construction is completed.

Result After Mitigation: There would be no residual potential for adverse effects on the environment related to biology.

References: 1988 Simi Valley General Plan; Ventura County General Plan; Natural Environmental Study Report, November 2001; Missing Linkages Study

	CEQA			
3.2.5 Historical and Cultural Resources: Would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in '15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to '15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☐	☐	☒

A study to identify potentially historic properties in the APE of the project and to evaluate the elgibility of any identified properties for listing in the national register of Historic places was conducted in November 2001. The Historical Property Survey Report (HPSR) indicates that properties or potentially historic properties have been identified within the APE of the proposed project. However, the proposed project will have no effect to the historic properties or potentially historic properties. The HPSR is based on regulations 36CFR800 for implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act as it applies to FHWA projects and cultural resources. It is used to identify all historic and cultural/archaeological resources that may be affected by a proposed undertaking, evaluate the eligibility of these resources for the National Register of Historic Places and apply the criteria of Effect and Adverse Effects (36CFR800.9) to eligible properties that may be affected.

The findings show the project is in the proximity of the trace of the National Register-listed Old Santa Susana Stagecoach Road. Field reviews conducted in March and April of 2001 concluded that no known cultural resources exist directly within the APE.

Mitigation:

- Boundaries for an Environmental Sensitive Area (ESA) shall be established in the field prior to commencement of work to prevent potential disruption of significant cultural resources due to the projects proximity to the trace of the National Register-listed Old Santa Susana Stagecoach Road.
- Should cultural materials or human remains be uncovered during construction on this project, work in the area of the find shall be stopped until a Caltrans archaeologist can evaluate the material.

Monitoring: Caltrans' Division of Environmental Planning shall monitor all mitigation until construction is completed.

Result After Mitigation: There would be no residual potential for adverse effects on the environment related to cultural resources.

References: Negative Archaeological Survey Report, October 200, Negative Historical Property Survey Report (November 2001)

	CEQA			
3.2.6 Geology and Soils: Would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	☐	☐	☐	☒
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Ground shaking is the primary cause of structural damage during an earthquake. The potential damage caused by ground shaking depends on the magnitude, duration and vibration frequency characteristics of the earthquake, which are functions of the fault and its proximity to the project; however, with the incorporation of state-of-the-art seismic design measures, the proposed project would not result in significant earthquake hazards. Please see Figure 3.1 to view the proximity of fault lines to the project area.

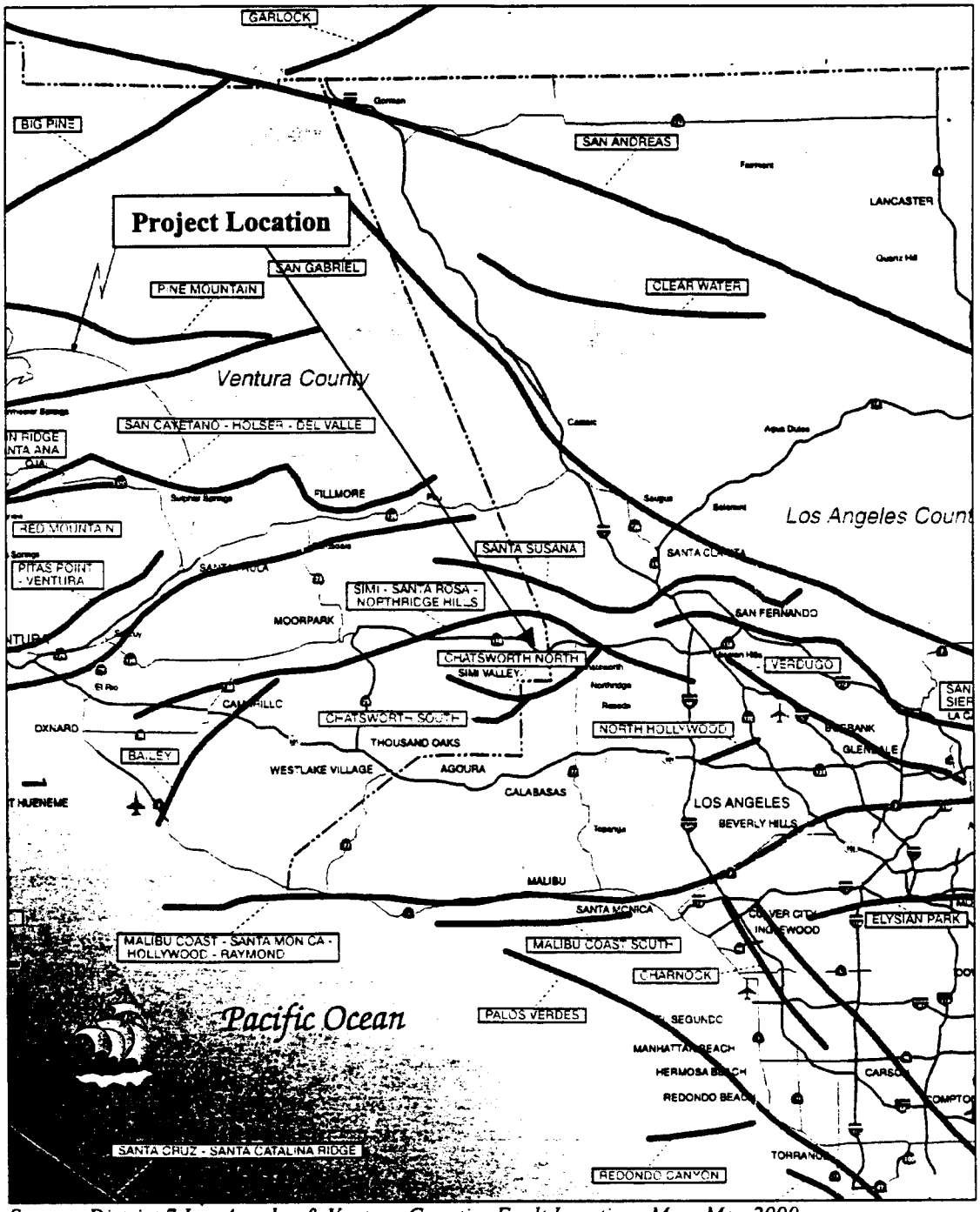
Mitigation: Caltrans BMPs would be implemented to the greatest extent practical.

Monitoring: Caltrans Division of Environmental Planning shall monitor all mitigation until construction is completed.

Result After Mitigation: There would be no residual potential for adverse effects on the environment related to geology and soils.

References: ND/FONSI 07-VEN-118 Widening From Tapo Canyon to the Ventura/Los Angeles County Line in Simi Valley, County of Ventura

Figure 3-1 Fault Locations Map



Source: District 7 Los Angeles & Ventura Counties Fault Locations Map, May 2000

	CEQA			
3.2.7 Hazards and Hazardous Materials: Would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	☐	☐	☐	☒

There are no schools, airports or private airstrips, or recorded hazardous materials sites in the project area.

Impacts are considered significant if the project activities are anticipated to result in the exposure of people and environmental resources to adverse levels of contamination, or, if contaminated conditions could adversely impact future development as a result of costly assessment and remediation. The Site Investigation Report (January 1999) prepared by Goecon for SR 118 (Ven-118 PM 27.3/32.6) resulted in the following determination:

Excavated soil may be considered nonhazardous and may be relinquished to the contractor as clean soil or reused in Caltrans right of way.

Mitigation: None required.

References: Site Investigation Report (January 1999) prepared by Goecon for SR 118 (Ven-118 PM 27.3/32.6)

CEQA

3.2.8 Hydrology and Water Quality: Would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level, which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner, which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner, which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	☐	☐	☐	☒

h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures, which would impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	☐	☐	☐	☒
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Waters of the U.S., Waters of the State and Wetlands

Wetlands are a subset of waters of the United States (waters of the U.S.) that are defined by specific vegetation, hydrology and soil criteria. As defined in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 328.3, waters of the U.S. include:

...territorial seas measured seaward a distance of three miles; tributaries of any defined water of the United Sates (including any ephemeral tributary); coastal and inland waters, lakes, rivers, streams and their tributaries; interstate waters and their tributaries, including interstate wetlands; wetlands adjacent to all of the above waters; and all other waters, such as interstate lakes, rivers, streams, isolated wetlands, mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes or natural ponds that are not part of a tributary system to interstate waters or to navigable waters of the U.S., the degradation or destruction of which could affect interstate commerce.

Jurisdictional limits of waters of the U.S. are defined by the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) contour that is often equated with the extent of a two-year flood water surface elevation. Wetlands, in turn, are defined by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Wetlands Delineation Manual (1987) as waters of the U.S. that:

...are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the USACE has authority to regulate activity that could discharge fill or dredge material or otherwise adversely modify wetlands or other waters of the United States. The Corps implements the federal policy embodied in Executive Order 11990, which, when implemented, is intended to result in no net loss of wetlands values or acres. In achieving the goals of the Clean Water Act, USACE seeks to avoid adverse impacts and to offset unavoidable adverse impacts on existing aquatic resources. Any fill or adverse modification of wetlands may require a permit from USACE prior to the start of work. Typically, permits issued by USACE are a condition of a project as mitigation to offset unavoidable

impacts on wetlands and other waters of the U.S. in a manner that achieves the goal of no net loss of wetland acres or values.

Perennial and intermittent streams also fall under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Sections 1601-1603 of the Fish and Game Code (Streambed Alteration Agreements) gives the CDFG regulatory authority over work within the stream zone (which could extend to the edge of the riparian habitat) consisting of, but not limited to, the diversion or obstruction of the natural flow or changes in the channel, bed, or bank of any river, stream or lake. California Department of Fish and Game identifies wetlands using a less stringent definition. Only hydrophytic vegetation needs be present for an area to be defined as a wetland by the CDFG.

No watercourses that occur in the study area have been identified positively as waters of the U.S. and do not fall under the jurisdiction of the USACE.

Estimate of the Concentration (ppb) and Load (lbs./day) From Non-point and Point Source Discharges.

Estimating the mass of pollutant loads transferred to a water body requires knowledge of surface water runoff volume, discharge location, and pollutant load sources for a given area. Pollutants transferred out of the study area by wet weather flows are the result of non-point pollution sources. The most accurate method to estimate pollutant loads for this type of pollution would be to collect and analyze samples of runoff directly from the project site. However, because pollutant concentrations in storm water runoff vary based on a number of short and long-term seasonal factors, including total rainfall, storm duration, intensity, and frequency among others, several years of data are typically required to collect a sufficient number of samples to produce statistically significant results. Alternately, pollutant loads can be assessed on an average annual basis using average pollutant concentration data from other published water quality investigations if available. Data was collected by the Caltrans Headquarters Environmental Engineering Unit, from various highway facilities, and represents constituents typically found in highway runoff. This data was then used to develop a "Water Quality Planning Tool" to estimate water quality of highway runoff.

Activities associated with pollutants discharged through dry weather flows would be limited to landscape irrigation. The majority of the irrigation water should be absorbed into the freeway slopes or at the bottom of fill. Therefore dry weather flows should not increase as a result of this project. As a result this impact would be less than significant

Estimates of the amount of runoff generated by the project during wet and dry seasons (i.e. weather)

The project area encumbers an existing 8.17 acres paved. The amount of area to be paved by this project is 2.03 acres. Paved areas are considered to be 95 to 100 percent impervious based on Caltrans Highway Design Manual. Therefore, there should be a

minimal increase in the amount of wet weather flows (runoff) experienced from this project.

Dry-weather flows are usually low-volume flows not resulting from precipitation. The quality of these flows is largely a function of the flow source, rather than the land uses the flows contact en route to the receiving body. Because dry-weather flows cannot be quantified, the analysis of dry weather flows is limited to the identification of factors that are likely to increase or decrease their occurrence. Sources of pollution potentially resulting in dry weather flows should be evaluated by projecting the activities to occur within the project limits.

This project will not increase activities corresponding with dry weather flows. Therefore, there should be no increase of dry weather flows.

Estimates of the amount of increased or decreased percolation due to the project.

The "Basin Plan" of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board - Los Angeles Region 4, identifies the project to be within the Los Angeles Coastal and San Fernando Valley Groundwater Basins. Hydrologic Sub Area 405.21 has a watershed of 185,828 acres. However, groundwater storage and groundwater elevations beneath the project boundaries should not substantially change.

This project consists of adding on and off-ramps to the Rocky Peak Road, which consists of compacted base material. Since compacted base material is considered to be 90 percent impervious and paved areas are considered to be 95 to 100 percent imperviousness, there should not be a substantial change in percolation due to the project. The existing paved project area of 8.17 acres represents 0.0044 percent of the watershed. The final paved project area will be 10.2 acres and represent 0.005488 percent of the watershed. There is a minimal change in the surface water runoff. Therefore, conversely it can be concluded that there should also be a minimal change in percolation.

Estimates of the net change in cubic feet per second of groundwater and surface water contributions under historic drought conditions as compiled by local water purveyors, the Department of Water Resources, and 10-year, 50-year, and 100-year flood conditions.

Wet-weather flows should have a minimal increase. The coefficient of imperviousness is considered to be 90 percent based on Caltrans Highway Design Manual. Paved areas are considered to be 95 to 100 percent impervious. The amount of compacted material that will be paved or improved by this project is 2.03 acres.

Since the project is approximately 1.0 kilometer in length, and the freeway drainage systems outfall to numerous different watercourses, it is impossible to calculate a

singular value for each of the changes in Q(10), Q(50), and Q(100) events. Alternatively a change in the runoff per acre would be a more practical and realistic approach to take. Based on this approach and using the Rational Equation with values of C=.90 for unpaved median and C=1.0 for paved median, the increase in surface water flow rates were estimated to be:

Q10 = 0.000306 cfs/acre Q50 = 0.000409 cfs/acre Q100 = 0.000475 cfs/acre

The net change in cubic feet per second of groundwater contributions should be less than significant since most of the rainfall associated within existing site conditions is direct runoff and not percolation. The project's scope of work is to add on and-off ramps to the Rocky Peak Road access to Route 118. A total of 2.03 acres of additional paved area is being added to the project site. This change would represent less than a 0.012 percent addition in the total surface runoff/groundwater inflows estimated and would not substantially change groundwater storage or groundwater elevations beneath the project boundaries.

Conclusion:

The proposed project is not within a 100-year flood hazard area and would not place structures within a 100-year flood hazard area. As shown in Figure 3-2 Flood Insurance Rate Map, the project site would be located within Zone C, which is identified as areas of minimal flooding identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Hydrology and water quality should not be affected by the construction of the proposed project. This project would not materially change existing drainage patterns. Runoff volumes are not expected to adversely change since there will be little increase in impervious areas for surface runoff.

Mitigation:

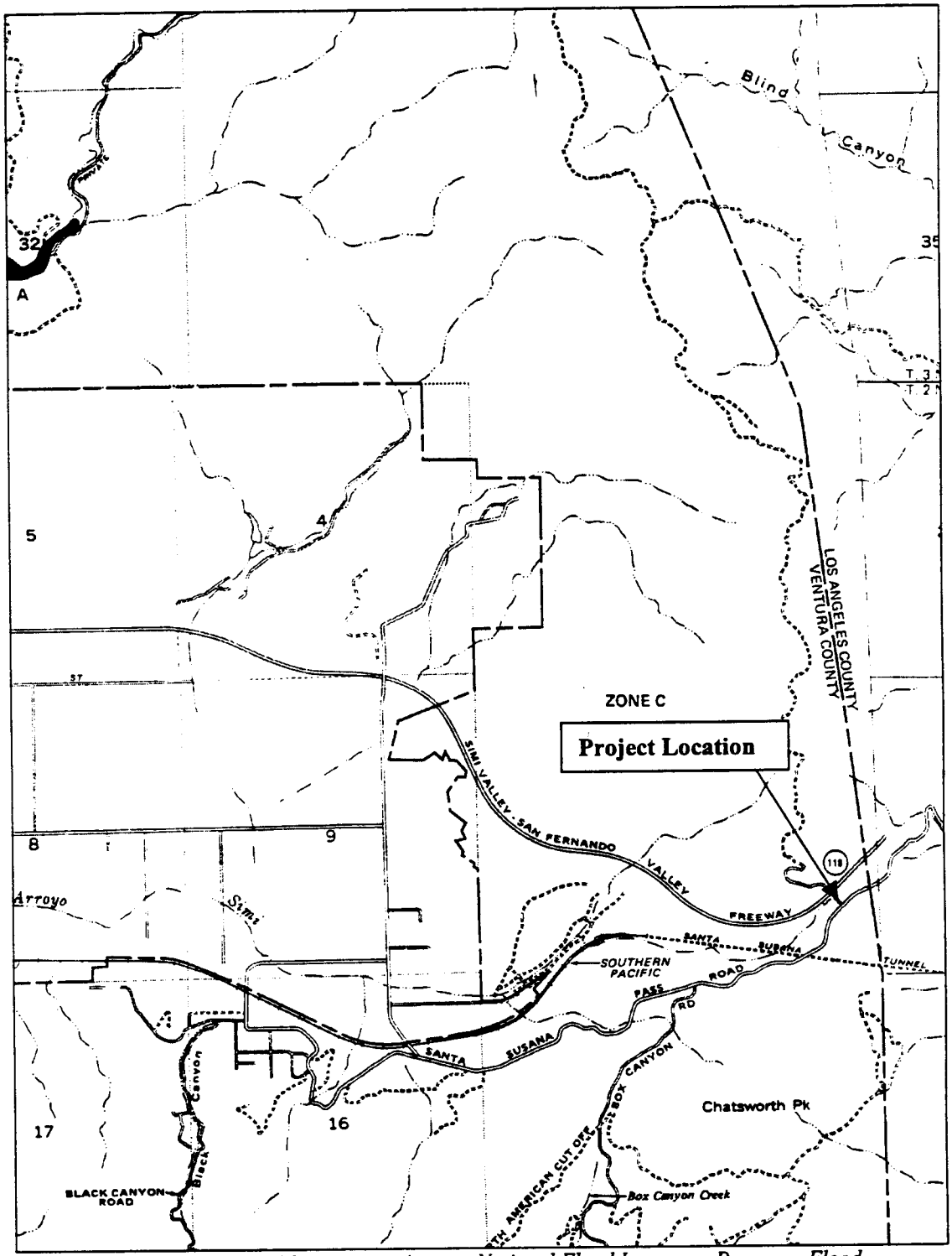
- A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and erosion control plan shall be provided by the contractor. The plans must be approved by the Resident Engineer and submitted for approval to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).
- Caltrans BMPs shall be implemented to the maximum extent practical.

Monitoring: Caltrans Division of Environmental Planning shall monitor all mitigation until construction is completed.

Result After Mitigation: There would be no residual potential for adverse effects on the environment related to hydrology and water quality.

References: (ND/FONSI 07-VEN-118 Widening From Tapo Canyon to the Ventura/Los Angeles County Line in Simi Valley, County of Ventura; Physical Environment Report October 2001), Storm Water Unit (NPDES) Report (February 2002)

Figure 3-2 Flood Insurance Rate Map



Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Flood Insurance Program, Flood Insurance Rate Map for Ventura County California, Panel 850, October 31, 1985

CEQA

3.2.9 Land Use and Planning: Would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Compatibility issues were analyzed by assessing the proposed uses relative to the current and planned land uses in the site vicinity. Impacts relating to compatibility of the proposed land uses with one another and with adjacent uses are considered significant if project implementation would create considerable physical conflicts, such as visual, noise, air quality, or safety concerns.

The proposed project would not divide an established community or conflict with any applicable land use plan, natural community conservation plan, policy or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The project is consistent with the 1988 Simi Valley General Plan and Ventura County General Plan.

Mitigation: None required.

References: 1988 Simi Valley General Plan; Ventura County General Plan

CEQA

3.2.10 Mineral Resources: Would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project would not represent any unique demand on energy and fuel resources. Due to the nature of the project, there should be no adverse impact to mineral resources.

Mitigation: None required.

Resources: ND/FONSI 07-VEN-118 Widening From Tapo Canyon to the Ventura/Los Angeles County Line in Simi Valley, County of Ventura

CEQA

3.2.11 Noise: Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The proposed project is not located in the vicinity of an airport or private airstrip. During the construction phase of the project, noise from construction activities may intermediately dominate the noise environment in the immediate area of construction. Construction noise is regulated by Caltrans standard specifications, Section 7-1.011, "Sound Control Requirements". No adverse noise impacts from construction are anticipated.

Federal Policies: This project has been classified as a Type 1 project as defined in the Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol (TNAP) for new highway construction and reconstruction projects. A Type 1 project is defined in 23CFR772 as a proposed Federal or Federal-aid highway project for the construction of a highway which significantly changes either the horizontal or vertical alignment, or increases the number of through-traffic lanes. Caltrans extends this definition to State-funded highway projects and adds the FHWA interpretation of the above definition.

Under NEPA, impacts must be identified and incorporated into the Environmental Document, including the impacts for which no or only partial mitigation is possible. The FHWA regulations constitute the Federal Noise Standard. Projects complying with this Standard are also in compliance with the requirements stemming from NEPA. Under FHWA, regulations (23CFR772), noise abatement must be considered for Type 1 projects when the project results in a substantial noise increase, or when the predicted noise levels approach or exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC). The NAC for various activity categories is given in Table 3.2.

State Policies: Under CEQA, a substantial noise increase may result in a significant adverse environmental effect and, if so, must be mitigated or identified as a noise impact for which it is likely that no, or only partial abatement measures are available and be incorporated into the Environmental Document.

Traffic Noise Protocol: The Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol applies to all new highway construction and reconstruction projects. It specifies the policies, procedures and practices to be used by agencies that sponsor such projects. The highway noise analysis and abatement/mitigation requirements specified in the Protocol are the same as those specified in CEQA, NEPA, 23CFR772 and Section 216 of the Streets and Highway Code.

According to the Protocol, a noise increase is substantial when the predicted noise levels with the project exceed existing noise levels with the project approach within 1 dBA, or exceed NAC.

Noise-Sensitive Receptors/Conclusion: Although noise-sensitive receptors in the project vicinity include single-family residences and park land, the Traffic Noise Analysis (2002) indicates that the residential area would not be impacted if the proposed project were completed according to CEQA, NEPA, 23CFR772 and Section 216 of the Streets and Highway Code. The existing noise level is 60 dBA and the future worst-hour noise level after completion of the project is predicted to be 61 dBA. The predicted future noise levels do not approach or exceed the Noise Abatement Criteria of 67 dBA; therefore, the area would not be impacted by the freeway traffic noise after completion of the project. Since no traffic noise impacts have been identified, noise abatement has not been considered for this project. (See

Appendix D for Noise Measurement Site Map and Appendix E for Sound Pressure Table)

Mitigation:

- Caltrans standard specifications (BMPs) shall be implemented to the maximum extent practical.
- All equipment shall have sound control devices in accordance with equipment manual requirements.
- The contractor shall implement appropriate additional noise mitigation measures including, but not limited to, changing the location of stationary construction equipment, turning off idling equipment, rescheduling construction activity, and notifying adjacent residents in advance of construction work or installing acoustic barriers around stationary construction noise source.

References: Traffic Noise Study, January 2002

Table 3.1 Noise Abatement Criteria/Federal Highway Administration

Category	Land Use	Leq, dBA
A	Tracts of land in which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need and where the preservation of those qualities is essential if the area is to continue to serve its purpose, i.e. amphitheaters, parks and open spaces.	57 (Exterior)
B	Picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sports areas, parks, residences, motels, hotels, schools, churches, libraries, and hospitals.	67 (Exterior)
C	Developed lands, properties or activities not included in Categories A or B above.	72 (Exterior)
D	Undeveloped Lands	---
E	Residences, motels, hotels, public meeting rooms, schools, churches, libraries, hospitals and auditoriums.	52 (Interior)

CEQA

3.2.12 Population and Housing: Would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide access for emergency vehicles, increase safety, and allow commuters to use Santa Susana Pass Road as an alternate route in case of freeway closures. The proposed project would not induce population growth in the area, but would accommodate any planned development. The project is consistent with the growth and planning goals of the local jurisdiction and with "pre-existing" planned growth in the area. The project would not require acquisition of property; therefore, there would be no displacement.

Mitigation: None required.

References: ND/FONSI 07-VEN-118 Widening From Tapo Canyon to the Ventura/Los Angeles County Line in Simi Valley, County of Ventura

CEQA

3.2.13 Public Services: Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Police protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Parks?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project area borders the Corriganville Regional Park (part of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District) and Rocky Peak Park. Other surrounding parks include Santa Susana Pass State Park, Chatsworth Park, White Oaks Park, Hialeah Springs, and Hummingbird Ranch. There are no schools in the vicinity of the proposed project.

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 prohibits the Secretary of Transportation from approving any program or project which:

> "requires the use of any publicly owned land from a park, recreational area or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, state or local significance as determined by federal, state or local officials having jurisdiction thereof, or any land from an historic site of national, state or local significance as so determined by such officials unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land, and such program includes all possible planning to minimize harm to such park, recreational area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge or historic site resulting from such use"

Source: Department of Transportation Act of 1983, 49 U.S.C. Section 21

Section 4(f) also requires consultation with the Department of the Interior, and as appropriate, other federal agencies, in developing transportation projects and programs using land protected by Section 4(f).

Conclusion: The proposed project would not require the use of any publicly owned land from a park, recreational area, historic site, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or any land protected by Section 4(f) that is of national, state or local significance as determined by federal, state or local officials. The proposed project would not cause an increase in the use of existing recreational facilities in the project area but rather accommodate future use from traffic that Ventura County's growth forecasts predict for 2025. There would be no impacts to parks or recreation.

Currently, emergency vehicles responding to accidents between Kuehner Drive and Rocky Peak Road on WB SR 118 would have to travel EB on SR 118 to Topanga Canyon Boulevard, exit and return on WB SR 118 to access the site. The project would not adversely impact public services. The project would benefit emergency response facilities by:

- Reducing response times to vehicle accidents on the WB SR 118 between Rocky Peak Road and Kuehner Drive.
- Reducing response times to medical emergencies or brushfire responses in the Rocky Peak Trail area.
- Reducing response times into the Lilac Lane, Mesa Drive and Santa Susanna Pass regimental areas.
- Reducing response times along the entire section of SR 118 in both directions in the event of an incorrectly reported location.
- Improving turnaround times for water shuttles in the area during wildland fires.
- Improving turnaround times for Ventura County Fire equipment that are canceled while responding up the grade into Los Angeles City/Los Angeles County Mutual Aid Response Zone.
- Decreasing ambulance transport times to local hospitals.
- Providing a safer route for responding to calls in the Rocky Peak area.
- Providing a point to re-direct EB traffic in the event of a problem between Rocky Peak & Topanga Canyon.

Mitigation: None required.

References: Simi Valley Fire Station 43Memo

	CEQA			
3.2.14 Recreation:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project area borders the Corriganville Regional Park (part of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District) and Rocky Peak Park. Other surrounding parks include Santa Susana Pass State Park, Chatsworth Park, White Oaks Park, Hialeah Springs, and Hummingbird Ranch.

The proposed project would not cause an increase in the use of existing recreational facilities in the project area but rather accommodate future use from traffic that Ventura County's growth forecasts predict for 2025. There would be no impacts to parks or recreation. Please see section 3.2.13 Public Services for an in depth discussion on effects to the neighboring parks.

Mitigation: None required.

References: Ventura County General Plan

CEQA

3.2.15 Transportation/Traffic: Would the project:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a) Cause an increase in traffic, which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	☐	☐	☐	☒

According to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) law and litigation, temporary environmental effects, including temporary disruption due to construction activities, are not substantial effects.

The project would not increase traffic but instead would accommodate traffic that Ventura County's growth forecasts predict for the year 2025. It would not impact level of service, circulation patterns, emergency access, or alternative transportation.

Because of the low ADT forecast of 980 for the year 2025 on the WB on-ramp, the Rocky Peak Road/Santa Susana Pass Road intersection will not likely result in an adverse traffic increase. Furthermore, traffic signals at the ramp terminus and at Rocky Peak Road/Santa Susana Pass Road intersection could be constructed in the future to prevent any traffic queues onto the freeway.

No parking signs are clearly posted throughout the project limits; therefore parking would not be affected.

Studies are currently in progress to determine present and future pedestrian safety issues.

Mitigation: None required.

References: Ventura County General Plan, 1988 Simi Valley General Plan

CEQA

3.2.16 Utilities and Service Systems: Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the projects projected demand in addition to the providers existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the projects solid waste disposal needs?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Drainage facilities would be modified to accommodate the proposed project. Drainage patterns will continue to flow in a similar fashion and flow into the same location. Due to the nature of the project utilities and services would not be adversely affected.

Mitigation: None required

References: Storm Water Unit (NPDES) Report (February 2002)

	CEQA			
3.2.17 Mandatory Findings of Significance:	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Potentially Significant and Cumulative Impacts

The following discussion describes the potentially significant and cumulative impacts of the project if mitigation is not incorporated. The CEQA Guidelines, Section 15130, states that "cumulative impacts shall be discussed when they are significant. The discussion of cumulative impacts shall reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as great detail as is

provided of the effects attributable to the project alone." As stated in Section 15355 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines:

> "Cumulative impacts" refers to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.
>
> (a) The individual effects may be changes resulting from a single project or a number of separate projects.
>
> (b) The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probably future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.

In accordance with NEPA 40 CFR 1508.7, cumulative effects "which result from the incremental consequences of an action when added to other past and reasonably foreseeable future actions" shall be discussed.

1. Aesthetics: The proposed project involves the construction of the EB off-ramp and WB on-ramp on SR 118 at Rocky Peak Road Overcrossing. The initial grades for these ramps already exist. Existing native vegetation should remain where feasible and new landscaping should consist of native seed. The project would not contribute to cumulative aesthetic impacts.

2. Biology: The project area is part of an important wildlife corridor that connects the San Gabriel, Santa Susana, and Santa Monica Mountain ranges. California State Park representatives say that many native animals can be found in the area. This area provides wildlife movement between the Simi Hills to the south and the Santa Susana Mountains to the north. This wildlife corridor is listed in the top ten priority corridors in Southern California.

   The undeveloped area surrounding Rocky Peak Road is slowly becoming encroached upon by urban developments from Simi Valley as well as the San Fernando Valley. This linkage area can be described as a choke point specifically because of the surrounding urbanization. The other projects in the surrounding area heighten the cumulative impacts associated with wildlife movement. Alamos Canyon has also been characterized as an important wildlife corridor. The proposed underpass reopening would compromise if not altogether eliminate an important wildlife corridor. The compounded effect of the impacts to the Alamos Canyon corridor and the increased traffic levels that Ventura County's growth forecasts predict on Rocky Peak Road could result in significant impacts to wildlife movement in Simi Valley and San Fernando Valley. Of the seven wildlife corridors along SR 118 in Simi Valley, only two are open air corridors (please see Figure 3-3). Most of the wildlife corridors are pipes/culverts. Rocky Peak Road is the only open air corridor that is an overpass. It has been stated that large carnivores are less likely to use culvert/pipe undercrossings as opposed to open-air underpasses/overcrossings. It is also recognized that large carnivores are

especially sensitive to isolation or fragmentation and prefer areas of natural habitat/vegetation. This project would result in the elimination of the only overpass with suitable habitat surroundings in the area. These surrounding developments could cumulatively effect wildlife movement between Simi Valley and the San Fernando Valley.

Figure 3-3 Wildlife Corridors Map

Source: United States Department of the Interior, National Parks Service, SAMO January 2000.

There would be no loss to sensitive wildlife habitat as a result of this project. The project would be carried out utilizing appropriate measures to avoid and minimize impacts to sensitive species, habitats and other resources. Long-term impacts would not occur as a result of implemented mitigation; short-term impacts would be minimized to the greatest extent practicable and mitigated where possible. To minimize impacts to the wildlife corridor, Caltrans is working with the National Park Service to develop a multi agency Wildlife Corridor Calibration Program. Such a

program would include corridor studies in unison with the National Park Service to better define the required characteristics and the location of a new wildlife corridor. This corridor should connect to the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills habitats and should be vegetated with coastal sage scrub and chaparral. Therefore, the project would not contribute significantly to any cumulative impacts on biological resources with the proposed mitigation implemented.

3. Geology and Soils: Seismic hazards are expected throughout California, including the displacement/ground rupture, seismic ground shaking, liquefaction, differential settlement, subsidence and landslides. The project would not increase or decrease these hazards, nor would it introduce additional population into an area where these hazards exist. Thus, the project would not contribute to cumulative geological or soils impacts.

4. Public Services: The purpose of the project is to improve safety, reduce response times for emergency vehicles responding to calls on WB SR 118, allow commuters to use Santa Susana Pass Road as an alternate route in case of freeway closures and to conform to state, regional and local plans and policies. Therefore, this project would have a positive impact to the existing public facilities in the area. The project would not contribute to cumulative impacts to public services.

5. Utilities and Services: Drainage facilities would be modified to accommodate the proposed project. However, drainage patterns will continue to flow in a similar fashion and flow into the same location. Therefore, the project would not contribute to cumulative impacts to utilities and services.

Conclusion

Construction and operation of the proposed project will not have substantial adverse effects.

Chapter 4 Coordination and Consultation

4.1 Scoping

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations do not require formal scoping for projects where an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment is prepared. However, a 30-day scoping period took place, to ensure that all concerns were presented for consideration and inclusion in the environmental studies. Scoping letters were mailed on December 11, 2001, (Appendix B) to elected officials, government agencies and concerned individuals who had expressed interest earlier in the process. The deadline for submittal of responses to Caltrans was set for January 12, 2002. However, all responses received after that date were reviewed. A summary of the comments and the comment letters are included in Appendix C. The following issues were identified in the scoping process:

- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Historic Resources
- Drainage/Hydrology
- Transportation/Circulation

4.2 Public Circulation

Caltrans will circulate the Environmental Assessment/ Initial Study (EA/IS) for the Rocky Peak Road Ramps Project for public review to elected officials, governmental agencies and other interested parties surrounding the project (see section 6.1 Mailing List).

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Chapter 5 List of Preparers

This Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS) was prepared the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The following Caltrans staff prepared this EA/IS:

Name	Title/Project Assignment	Responsibility
Cathy Wright	Senior Environmental Planner	Document Review
Cherylann L. Henderson	Assoc. Environmental Planner	Document Preparation
Aaron P. Burton	Environmental Planner	Document Preparation
Edward T. Boll	Senior Landscape Architect	Aesthetic Assessment
Gary Iverson	Senior District Archaeologist	Archaeological Assessment
Barbara Sylvia	Archaeologist	Archaeological Assessment
Andrea Morrison/Galvin	Architiectural Historian	Architectural Assessment
Paul Caron	Senior District Biologist	Biological Assessment
Amy Pettler	Environmental Planner	Biological Assessment
Jerrel Kam	Senior Transportation Engineer	Floodplain Assessment
George Ghebranious	District Hazardous Waste Coordinator	Hazardous Waste Assessment
Hamy Messiha	Transportation Engineer	Hazardous Waste Assessment
Jin S. Lee	Senior Transp. Engineer	Noise Investigations
Arnold Barmar	Transportation Engineer	Noise Investigations
Fouad E. Abdelkerim	Senior Transp. Engineer	Physical Environmental Investigations
Reza Fateh	Project Manager	Project Management
Susan Yee	Senior Transp. Engineer	Project Design
Ed Dalano	Transportation Engineer	Project Design
Garabed Kevorkian	Senior Transp. Engineer	Traffic Investigations
Trung Duong	Transportation Engineer	Traffic Investigations
Shirley Pak	Senior Transp. Engineer	Water Quality Investigations

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Chapter 6 Circulation List and Document Availability

This section provides a list of public officials, agencies and organizations that will receive a copy of the Environmental Assessment/ Initial Study (IS/EA)

6.1 Mailing List

6.1.1 Elected Officials

The Honorable Tom McClintock
Senator 19th Dist.- State Senate
223 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., #326
Thousand Oaks,CA 91360

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senator
11111 Santa Monica Blvd. #915
Los Angeles,CA 90025

The Honorable Michael D. Antonovich, Fifth District
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The Honorable Hal Bernson
Council Dist. 12 - Los Angeles City
200 North Main Street, Room 319
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
U.S. Senator
1700 Montgomery St Ste. 240
San Francisco, CA 94111

Council Members
City of Simi Valley
2929 Tapo Canyon Road
Simi Valley, CA 93063

The Honorable James Hahn
Mayor, City of Los Angeles
200 North Main Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The Honorable Brad Sherman
U.S. Congressman, 24th District
21031 Ventura Blvd., Suite 1010
Woodland Hills, CA 91364-6400

The Honorable Bill Davis
Mayor, City of Simi Valley
2929 Tapo Canyon Road
Simi Valley, CA 93063

The Honorable Judy Mikels
Fourth District, County of Ventura
3855-F Alamo Street
Simi Valley, CA 93063

The Honorable Elton Gallegly
U.S. Congressman, 23rd District
300 Esplande Dr, Suite 1800
Oxnard,CA 93030-1261

The Honorable Keith Richman
Dist. 38 - State Legislature
10727 White Oak #124
Granada Hills, CA 91344

6.1.2 Agencies

Mike Sedell, City Manager
City of Simi Valley
2929 Tapo Canyon Rd
Simi Valley, CA 93063

Technical Support Division
California Air Resource Board
P.O. Box 2815
Sacramento, CA 95812

Fred Worthly
Ca. Dept. of Fish & Game
350 Golden Shore, Suite 50
Long Beach, CA 90801

Pam Beare, C.F. Raysbrook
California Dept. of Fish & Game
4949 Viewridge Avenue
San Diego, CA 92123

Battlion Chief- Battalion 4
Ventura County Fire Department
1910 Church Street
Simi Valley, CA 93065

Ventura County Heritage Board
800 S. Victoria Ave.
Ventura, CA 93009

Gene Hostetler
Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District
1692 Sycamore Drive
Simi Valley, CA 93065

State Clearinghouse
P.O. Box 3044
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

Craig Faanes
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
2493 Portola Rd, Suite B
Ventura, CA 93003

Richard Baldwin
Ven. Co. Air Pollution Control Dist.
669 County Square Drive, 2nd Floor
Ventura,CA 93003-5417

Jeffrey Smith, AICP
SCAG
818 W. 7th St. 12th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017-3435

Christopher Stephens,
County Planning Director
County of Ventura
800 S Victoria Ave, L#1750
Ventura, CA 93009

Ca. Regional Water Quality Control Board
Elizabeth Erickson
320 W. 4th St., Suite 200
Los Angeles, CA 90013

James A. Noyes
Director of Public Works
County of Los Angeles
900 South Fremont Ave
Alhambra, CA 91803

Area Commander
California Highway Patrol
4657 Valentine Road
Ventura,CA 93003

Mr. Eric Bergh, Manager
Calleguas Municipal WaterDistrict
2100 Olsen Road
Thousand Oaks,CA 91360

Tim Nanson, Director
City of Simi Valley, Public Works
2929 Tapo Canyon Rd
Simi Valley, CA 93063

Mark Pisano, Excutive Director
SCAG
818 W. 7th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Executive Secretary
Native American Heritage Comm.
915 Capitol Mall, Room 288
Sacramento, CA 95814

Paul Edelman, Al Boughey
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
5750 Ramirez Canyon Rd
Malibu, CA 90265

Dennis Dasker, Chief
LARWQCB
320 W. 4th St, Suite 200
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Pete Nichols/Paul Spitler
California Wilderness Coalition
2655 Portage Bay East Ste 5
Davis, CA 95616

Ventura County Historical Society
Southern Pacific Building
100 East Main Street
Ventura, CA 93001

Arthur E. Goulet, Director
Ventura Co. Public Works Agency
800 S. Victoria Ave
Ventura, CA 93009-1600

Ginger Gherardi, Exec. Director
Ventura County Assoc. of Govt's
950 County Square Dr, Suite 207
Ventura, CA 93003

Dana E. Heiberg, Woody Smeck
National Park Service
Santa Monica Mountains NRA
401 West Hillcrest Drive
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

6.1.3 Businesses

Corriganville Preservation Committee
2277 Stinson Street
Simi Valley, CA 93065

Sierra Club-Los Padres Chapter
P.O. Box 90924
Santa Barbara, CA 93910

6.2 Document Availability

The Rocky Peak Road Ramps EA/IS will be available for public review at the following locations:

Caltrans District 7
Division of Environmental Planning
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Ventura Co. Public Works Agency
Transportation Department
Government Center Office
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Simi Valley Library
2969 Tapo Canyon Road
Simi Valley, CA 93063

Appendix A Title VI Policy Statement

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
1120 N STREET
P. O. BOX 942873
SACRAMENTO, CA 94273-0001
PHONE (916) 654-5267
FAX (916) 654-6608

July 26, 2000

TITLE VI
POLICY STATEMENT

The California State Department of Transportation under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, ensures that no person in the State of California shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex and national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity it administers.

Jeff Morales

JEFF MORALES
Director

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Appendix B Notice of Scoping/ Initiation of Studies Letter

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY GRAY DAVIS, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 7, 120 SOUTH SPRING STREET
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-3606
TDD (213) 897-6610

Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!

December 11, 2001

File:07-VEN-118 KP 51.5/52.3
Construct EB Off-ramp and
WB On-ramp to Rocky Peak
Road Interchange

Responsible Agencies, Review Agencies, Trustee Agencies,
and Individuals interested in the proposed project

Notice of Scoping/Initiation of Studies

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is initiating studies for improvements to the interchange of State Highway Route 118 and Rocky Peak Road in the County of Ventura. The proposed improvements include:

- Adding an eastbound single lane off-ramp on the west-half of State Route 118 and Rocky Peak Road interchange.
- Adding a westbound single lane on-ramp on the west-half of State Route 118 and Rocky Peak Road interchange.
- Installing a ramp-meter on the westbound on-ramp.

A graphical representation of the proposal is attached.

Preliminary environmental resource studies indicate that the appropriate environmental document for this project would be an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment that could lead to a Mitigated Negative Declaration/Finding of No Significant Impact (MND/FONSI).

Please advise us within 30 days from the date of this notice if you have existing facilities or plan development in the study area. During the course of this study, Caltrans will work closely with all agencies and their staff to exchange ideas, assure that all pertinent factors are considered, and develop mitigation that might afford a mutually acceptable solution. Caltrans would welcome any other comments or suggestions you may have concerning potential social, economic, and environmental impacts along the Route 118 project limits.

If requested, a public hearing will be held to discuss the project studies when sufficient engineering, environmental and socioeconomic data has been developed. The public hearing will be publicized and you will be notified in advance of the time and location.

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"

Please send your written comments by January 12, 2002 to:

Ronald J. Kosinski, Deputy District Director
Division of Environmental Planning, Mail Stop 16A
California Department of Transportation
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012-3606
Attention: Cherylann L. Henderson

If you have any questions, please contact Cherylann L. Henderson at (213) 897-9095 (email: cheryl_henderson@dot.ca.gov). Caltrans would like to thank you for your interest in this important transportation study.

Sincerely,

Ron Kosinski, Deputy District Director

Division of Environmental Planning

Attachment

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"

Appendix C Scoping Comments Received

Correspondent	Key Comments	Addressed
California Regional Water Quality Control Board	• A request for additional information regarding the project and how it may influence water quality	Section 3.2.8
Department of Fish and Game	• A complete, recent assessment of the flora and fauna within and adjacent to the project area should be performed. • A thorough discussion of direct, indirect and cumulative impacts should be performed. • A range of alternatives should be analyzed. • A California Endangered Species Act Permit may be necessary.	Section 3.2.4
Department of the Interior	• The project may diminish the value of the Rocky Peak Overcrossing as a wildlife corridor. A wildlife bridge should be proposed. • A program should be implemented to track wildlife movement.	Section 3.2.4
Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District	• The project may reduce accessibility to Rocky Peak Park. • Loss of parking • The project may diminish the value of the Rocky Peak Overcrossing as a wildlife corridor.	Section 3.2.4 Section 3.2.13 Section 3.2.14 Section 3.2.15
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy	• The project may diminish the value of the Rocky Peak Overcrossing as a wildlife corridor. • The project may reduce accessibility to Rocky Peak Park.	Section 3.2.4 Section 3.2.13 Section 3.2.14 Section 3.1.15
City of Simi Valley	• The area of potential effect should be surveyed for vegetation that is considered endangered, rare, and a "species of concern." • Pedestrian safety should be examined.	Section 3.2.4 Section 3.2.15
Southern California Association of Governments	• Appropriate SCAG policies should be properly cited	Section 3.2.3
Ventura County Air Pollution Control District	• The district recommends that conditions be placed to minimize fugitive dust and particulate matter.	Section 3.2.3
Ventura County, Public Works Agency	• No air quality impacts are anticipated. • The project may induce population growth.	Section 3.2.3 Section 3.2.12
Fire Station 43, Captain Frank McGrath	• The completion of the proposed project is essential to the station's emergency response times.	Section 3.2.13

California Regional Water Quality Control Board

California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Los Angeles Region

Winston H. Hickox
Secretary for Environmental Protection

320 W. 4th Street, Suite 200, Los Angeles, California 90013
Phone (213) 576-6600 FAX (213) 576-6640
Internet Address: http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/~rwqcb4

Gray Davis
Governor

January 15, 2002

Caltrans
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

COPY

RE: CEQA DOCUMENTATION FOR PROJECT IN THE SANTA CLARA WATERSHED
Project: State Routes 118 Interchange improvements at Rocky Peak Road Overcrossing

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the CEQA documentation for the above-mentioned project. For your information a list of permitting requirements and Regional Board Contacts is provided in Attachment A hereto.

The project site lies in the Santa Clara watershed that was listed as being impaired pursuant to Section 303 (d) of the Clean Water Act. Impairments listed in reaches downstream from the proposed project include nutrients and their effects, salts, coliform bacteria, and historic pesticides. The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board will be developing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the watershed, but the proposed project is expected to proceed before applicable TMDLs are adopted. In the interim, the Regional Board must carefully evaluate the potential impacts of new projects that may discharge to impaired waterbodies.

Our review of your documentation shows that it does not include information on how this project will change the loading of these pollutants into the watershed. Please provide the following additional information for both the construction and operational phases of the project.

- For each constituent listed above, please provide an estimate of the concentration (ppb) and load (lbs/day) from non-point and point source discharges.
- Estimates of the amount of additional runoff generated by the project during wet and dry seasons.
- Estimate of the amount of increased or decreased percolation due to the project.

California Regional Water Quality Control Board

January 14, 2002

- Estimates of the net change in cubic feet per second of groundwater and surface water contributions under historic drought conditions (as compiled by local water purveyors, the Department of Water Resources, and others), and 10-year 50-year and 100-year flood conditions.

If you have any questions please call me at (213) 576-6683.

Sincerely,

Theresa Rodgers

for Elizabeth Erickson
Associated Geologist, TMDL Unit
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

EE
Attachments

Cc: file
State Clearinghouse (2001121100)

Department of Fish and Game

STATE OF CALIFORNIA-THE RESOURCES AGENCY GRAY DAVIS, *Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

South Coast Region
4949 Viewridge Avenue
San Diego, California 92123
(858) 467-4201
FAX (858) 467-4299

January 18, 2002

Cherylann L. Henderson
California Department of Transportation
120 S. Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012-3606

Dear Ms. Henderson:

Comments on the Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the SR 118 Interchange Improvements at Rocky Peak Road Overcrossing (SCH# 200112110)

The Department of Fish and Game (Department) appreciates this opportunity to comment on the above-referenced project relative to impacts to biological resources. The proposed project will add an eastbound single lane off-ramp and a westbound single lane on-ramp on State Route 118 and Rocky Peak Road interchange. To enable Department staff to adequately review and comment on the proposed project, we recommend the following information be included in the Draft Negative Declaration:

1. A complete, recent assessment of the flora and fauna within and adjacent to the project area, with particular emphasis upon identifying endangered, threatened, and locally unique species and sensitive habitats.

   a. A thorough recent assessment of rare plants and rare natural communities, following the Department's May 1984 Guidelines (revised August 1997) for Assessing Impacts to Rare Plants and Rare Natural Communities.

   b. A complete recent assessment of sensitive fish, wildlife, reptile, and amphibian species. Seasonal variations in use of the project area should also be addressed. Focused species-specific surveys, conducted at the appropriate time of year and time of day when the sensitive species are active or otherwise identifiable, are required. Acceptable species-specific survey procedures should be developed in consultation with the Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

   c. Rare, threatened, and endangered species to be addressed should include all those which meet the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) definition (see CEQA Guidelines, § 15380).

Department of Fish and Game

d. The Department's California Natural Diversity Data Base in Sacramento should be contacted at (916) 327-5960 to obtain current information on any previously reported sensitive species and habitat, including Significant Natural Areas identified under Chapter 12 of the Fish and Game Code. Also, any Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) or any areas that are considered sensitive by the local jurisdiction that are located in or adjacent to the project area must be addressed.

2. A thorough discussion of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts expected to adversely affect biological resources, with specific measures to offset such impacts. This discussion should focus on maximizing avoidance and minimizing impacts.

a. CEQA Guidelines, § 15125(a), direct that knowledge of the regional setting is critical to an assessment of environmental impacts and that special emphasis should be placed on resources that are rare or unique to the region.

b. Project impacts should be analyzed relative to their effects on off-site habitats and populations. Specifically, this should include nearby public lands, open space, adjacent natural habitats, and riparian ecosystems. Impacts to and maintenance of wildlife corridor/movement areas, including access to undisturbed habitat in adjacent areas, should be fully evaluated and provided.

c. The zoning of areas for development projects or other uses that are nearby or adjacent to natural areas may inadvertently contribute to wildlife-human interactions. A discussion of possible conflicts and mitigation measures to reduce these conflicts should be included in the environmental document.

d. A cumulative effects analysis should be developed as described under CEQA Guidelines, § 15130. General and specific plans, as well as past, present, and anticipated future projects, should be analyzed relative to their impacts on similar plant communities and wildlife habitats.

e. Impacts to migratory wildlife affected by the project should be fully evaluated. This can include such elements as migratory butterfly roost sites and neo-tropical bird and waterfowl stop-over and staging sites. All migratory nongame native bird species are protected by international treaty under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 (50 CFR Section 10.13). Sections 3503, 3503.5 and 3513 of the California Fish and Game Code prohibit take of all birds and their active nests including raptors and other migratory nongame birds.

f. Impacts to all habitat from City and County required Fuel Modification Zones (FMZ). Areas slated as mitigation for loss of habitat shall not occur within the FMZ.

g. Proposed project activities (including disturbances to vegetation) should take place outside of the breeding bird season (March1 - August 15) to avoid take (including

Department of Fish and Game

disturbances which would cause abandonment of active nests containing eggs and/or young). If project activities cannot avoid the breeding bird season, active nests shall be avoided and provided with a minimum buffer as determined by a biological monitor (the Department recommends a minimum 500 foot buffer for all active raptor nests).

3. A range of alternatives should be analyzed to ensure that alternatives to the proposed project are fully considered and evaluated. A range of alternatives which avoid or otherwise minimize impacts to sensitive biological resources including wetlands/riparian habitats, alluvial scrub, coastal sage scrub, native woodlands, etc. should be included. Specific alternative locations should also be evaluated in areas with lower resource sensitivity where appropriate.

   a. Mitigation measures for project impacts to sensitive plants, animals, and habitats should emphasize evaluation and selection of alternatives which avoid or otherwise minimize project impacts. Off-site compensation for unavoidable impacts through acquisition and protection of high-quality habitat elsewhere should be addressed.

   b. The Department considers Rare Natural Communities as threatened habitats having both regional and local significance. Thus, these communities should be fully avoided and otherwise protected from project-related impacts.

   c. The Department generally does not support the use of relocation, salvage, and/or transplantation as mitigation for impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species. Department studies have shown that these efforts are experimental in nature and largely unsuccessful.

4. A California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Permit must be obtained, if the project has the potential to result in "take" of species of plants or animals listed under CESA, either during construction or over the life of the project. CESA Permits are issued to conserve, protect, enhance, and restore State-listed threatened or endangered species and their habitats. Early consultation is encouraged, as significant modification to a project and mitigation measures may be required in order to obtain a CESA Permit. Revisions to the Fish and Game Code, effective January 1998, require that the Department issue a separate CEQA document for the issuance of a CESA permit unless the project CEQA document addresses all project impacts to listed species and specifies a mitigation monitoring and reporting program that will meet the requirements of a CESA permit. For these reasons, the following information is requested:

   a. Biological mitigation monitoring and reporting proposals should be of sufficient detail and resolution to satisfy the requirements for a CESA Permit.

   b. A Department-approved Mitigation Agreement and Mitigation Plan are required for plants listed as rare under the Native Plant Protection Act.

Department of Fish and Game

5. The Department opposes the elimination of watercourses and/or their channelization or conversion to subsurface drains. All wetlands and watercourses, whether intermittent or perennial, must be retained and provided with substantial setbacks which preserve the riparian and aquatic habitat values and maintain their value to on0site and off0site wildlife populations.

   - The Department requires a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement, pursuant to Section 1600 *et seq.* of the Fish and Game Code, with the applicant prior to any direct or indirect impact of a lake or stream bed, channel, or bank or associated riparian resources. The Department's issuance of a Streambed Alteration Agreement for a project that is subject to CEQA will require CEQA compliance actions by the Department as a responsible agency. To facilitate our issuance of the agreement when CEQA applies, the Department may consider the local jurisdiction's document for the project. To minimize additional requirements by the Department, the document should fully identify the potential impacts to the lake, stream or riparian resources and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring and reporting commitments for issuance of the agreement. Early consultation is recommended, since modification of the proposed project may be required to avoid or reduce impacts to fish and wildlife resources.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. Questions regarding this letter or further coordination on these issues should be directed to Ms. Trudy Ingram at 805-640-9897.

Sincerely,

C. F Raysbrook
Regional Manager

cc: Ms. Morgan Wehtje - DFG, Camarillo
Ms. Terri Dickerson - DFG, Laguna Niguel
Ms. Trudy Ingram - DFG, Ojai

State Clearinghouse - Sacramento

TI:ti/sl
File: Chron
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United States Department of the Interior

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area
401 West Hillcrest Drive
Thousand Oaks, California 91360-4207

In reply refer to:
A58 (SAMO)
January 8, 2002

Mr. Ronald J. Kosinski RK
Division of Environmental Planning: Mail Stop 16A
California Department of Transportation
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012-3606

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

The purpose of this letter is to respond to the December 11, 2001 Notice of Scoping for the Route 118 and Rocky Peak Road interchange. While the project area is outside of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area boundary, it does affect an area that has substantial implications for long-term ecosystem viability in the Simi Hills and Santa Monica Mountains. We thank you for the notice and greatly appreciate the opportunity to comment.

The project bisects the Santa Susana Pass, which connects broad areas of natural habitat linking the Santa Monica Mountains and the Simi Hills to the Santa Susana Mountains. The long-term viability of the ecosystem of the Santa Monica Mountains is dependent upon linkages between habitat areas that offer dispersal and genetic interchange options for wildlife. This particular location was recently identified by several state and federal agencies as one of 300 critical linkages within the state of California. Subsequently, the Santa Susana-Simi-Santa Monica linkage was targeted as one of the top 10 priorities out of 60 missing links in the South Coast Ecoregion. See also the enclosed spot aerial map and excerpts from the report entitled "Missing Linkages," which was featured in a Los Angeles Times article on August 7, 2001.

It is hard to overstate the importance of the Santa Susana Pass. We strongly believe that the appropriate mitigation for the development of a full interchange at 118/Rocky Peak Road is the establishment of a viable wildlife passage. Species of particular concern include mammals such as bobcats, badgers, mule deer, coyotes and mountain lions. Regarding this mitigation, we suggest the following features:

1. A dedicated wildlife bridge or other crossing. The existing highway cut and side slopes appear to support a bridge versus an underpass. A location to the west of the existing road bridge appears to be more feasible, and it may reduce the length of the span by being clear of the entrance/exit ramps.

United States Department of the Interior

2. The bridge should be covered with soil and native vegetation and have solid sides to block views of the highway and vehicles.

3. The approaches to the crossing must also be considered if wildlife passage is to be optimized. Fencing to keep target species off of the freeway and to direct them to the crossing will be critical.

4. A review of published sources and information from a recent tour of European wildlife crossing facilities in five countries indicates that many "green bridges" are in the range of 8 to 15 meters wide (October 2001 International Technology Scan sponsored by FHWA and AASHTO). Many of the European examples are hourglass shaped overpasses. However, narrower, simple bridges that are considerably more narrow were also cited as being effective for small, medium and large mammals in some circumstances.

5. Our experience tracking mammals in the Santa Monica Mountains suggests that an unpaved pedestrian trail on an otherwise vegetated "green bridge" would not greatly reduce its use by wildlife.

6. A program should also be implemented to monitor wildlife movement before and after the facility is constructed.

We recognize that there will be a substantial cost to design and construct a wildlife crossing. The National Park Service is ready to support the Department of Transportation in efforts to gain supplemental mitigation funding for this project and also to assist with the implementation of monitoring devices at the crossing. Our initial thought is that the project would be a strong candidate for the TEA-21 Enhancement Program or the state's Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation funding, although other funding sources may be more effective.

If there are any questions on this project or if we can be of assistance, please call Chief of Planning, Science and Resource Management, Dr. Ray Sauvajot, at 805-370-2339 or Transportation Planner Dana Heiberg at 805-370-2347.

Sincerely,

Woody Smeck
Acting Superintendent

Enclosure

Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District

RANCHO SIMI RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT
1692 Sycamore Drive, Simi Valley, California 93065 • (805) 584-4400 • FAX (805) 526-7646

February 1, 2002

Ms. Cherylann Henderson
Caltrans
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012-3606

Subject: Notice of Preparation of an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment for the State Route 118 Interchange Improvements at Rocky Peak Road

Dear Ms. Henderson:

The Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District is an independent special district which was formed by the voters on October 3, 1961. The District encompasses 113 square miles in which the District maintains and operates 3,332 acres of park and open space lands.

Within the District boundaries is the SR-118/Rocky Peak Road interchange. The District owns adjacent land directly south of the project - Corriganville Park, a former well-known movie ranch and amusement park which currently attracts more than 48,000 visitors annually. The District also holds a conservation easement over the 4,000 acre Rocky Peak Park which is owned and operated by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy/Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority.

The District is concerned about the impact of the proposed improvements to the interchange at SR-118 and Rocky Peak Road to the public's accessibility to Rocky Peak Park. During most weekends, approximately ten to twenty cars throughout the day are parked along the bridge and just north of it. The proposed project will greatly restrict parking opportunities, thereby eliminating this trailhead entrance to the park.

There does exist the opportunity to direct the displaced park users across SR-118 to a portion of Corriganville Park located on the northeast corner of Rocky Peak Road and Santa Susana Pass Road. This area, although presently unimproved, is flat and graded. Therefore, the opportunity exists to mitigate the loss of accessibility to the Rocky Peak Park trailhead by creating a parking lot for approximately twenty-five cars on District property. The District is willing to maintain and operate the parking lot once it is built.

The District also wishes to express its concern that the proposed project will harm the value of the current freeway overcrossing as a functional wildlife corridor between the Santa Susana

Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District

Mountains and the Simi Hills. This overpass now provides a cross-freeway movement corridor for many animals including mountain lions. The additional constant noise and traffic of the proposed project is surely to impact the crossing as a wildlife corridor. The District encourages Caltrans to carefully study possible mitigation measures including a wildlife habitat bridge or acquisition of immediate open space between the interchange and Box Canyon Road which would encourage wildlife movement in the area.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment at this early stage of the planning process. Please direct all future correspondence regarding this matter to Ed Hayduk, Park Planning and Development Administrator at 805-584-4421.

Sincerely,

Gene P. Hostetler
Chairman
Board of Directors
GPH/jh
c: Board of Directors
General Manager
Park Planning and Development Administrator
Legal Counsel

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

STATE OF CALIFORNIA--THE RESOURCES AGENCY GRAY DAVIS, Governor

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY
LOS ANGELES RIVER CENTER AND GARDENS
570 WEST AVENUE TWENTY-SIX, SUITE 100
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90065
PHONE (323) 221-8900
FAX (323) 221-9001

January 28, 2002

Ms. Cherylann Henderson
Caltrans
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012-3606

Notice of Preparation of an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment for the State Route 118 Interchange Improvements at Rocky Peak Road

Dear Ms. Henderson:

The proposed project is located within the Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor portion of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's (Conservancy) jurisdiction. The Conservancy owns the land adjacent to the project within Rocky Peak Park to the north and a small wedge of land along Santa Susana Pass Road.

The Santa Susana Mountains provide the only remaining habitat linkage between the Santa Monica Mountains-Simi Hills complex and the multi-thousand-square-mile Angeles and Los Padres National Forests. If adequate habitat connectivity between the Simi Hills and the Santa Susana Mountains is not maintained, medium and large-bodied mammal populations in their collective 350-square-miles of contiguous habitat are certain to decline. Only two connections remain between these ranges, at the Santa Susana Pass and at Alamos Canyon. Because of the inevitable construction of a full-scale 118 Freeway interchange at Alamos Canyon, the best hope for a fully-functional cross-freeway, inter-mountain range habitat linkage is in the Santa Susana Pass.

The species most at risk from potential isolation are mountain lions, American badgers, bobcats, grey foxes, long-tailed weasels, ringtailed cats, mule deer, and coyotes. Sub-populations of all of these species currently exist in both ranges on either side of the 118 Freeway.

In November 2000, approximately 200 land managers and ecologists participated in the Missing Linkages conference, which identified 60 critical linkages (i.e. wildlife corridors) in the South Coast Ecoregion (Penrod *et al.* 2000). The South Coast Ecoregion is bordered on the east by the Sonoran and Mojave deserts, the Mexican border to the south, and the Santa Ynez and Transverse Ranges in the north. The Santa Susana Pass linkage (ID # 21)

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

belongs to a grouping of linkages in the Santa Monica Mountains and Simi Hills that the conference identified as one of the ten most important and imperiled wildlife corridors in the ecoregion.

The 118 Freeway severs the Santa Susana Mountains from the Simi Hills. Currently, the freeway overpass and underpass in the Santa Susana Pass provide a cross-freeway movement corridor. In addition, many animals, particularly mountain lions, make unsuccessful crossings on the actual freeway road surface. The Environmental Assessment prepared by Caltrans entitled, "State Route 118 (Ronald Regan Freeway) Freeway Widening from Tapo Canyon Road to the Ventura/Los Angeles County Line," describes another project within the region whereby the two freeway lanes will be added to the 118 Freeway. However, to date, not a single development project approval, or road project, has included any mitigation to offset the cumulative adverse effects of the 118 Freeway on wildlife movement between the Simi Hills and the Santa Susana Mountains.

The proposed improvements to the interchange at State Route 118 and Rocky Peak Road will greatly diminish the value of the overcrossing as a functional wildlife corridor because of a reduction of vegetative cover and the subsequent replacement with pavement, an increase in vehicular traffic, and an increase in human use and disturbance of the area. Therefore, the appropriate mitigation for the creation of a full interchange at State Route 118 and Rocky Peak Road is the establishment of a separate wildlife bridge. This bridge should be covered with soil and native vegetation, and all land leading up to the bridge should be restored with native vegetation. Solid sides should be erected to block the views of the highway, so as not to prevent the use of the bridge from wildlife. This view is supported by the National Park Service in their letter dated January 8, 2002.

The proposed improvements to the interchange at State Route 118 and Rocky Peak Road will also reduce the accessability of Rocky Peak Park to the public. During most weekends, approximately ten to twenty cars are parked along the bridge and just north of it. The changes to the intersection proposed in this project will create additional traffic, thereby removing parking for the trailhead at Rocky Peak Park. The Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District owns Corriganville Park south of State Route 118 and adjacent to its right-of-way. The northeast corner, which is part of Corriganville Park, of the intersection of Rocky Peak Road and Santa Susana Pass Road is flat and graded. Therefore, the appropriate mitigation for the reduced accessability to the Rocky Peak Park trailhead is the creation of a parking lot for twenty-five cars on the piece of land owned by the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. The Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District is willing to maintain the parking lot once it is built.

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

Caltrans
State Route 118 Interchange Improvements at Rocky Peak Road
January 28, 2002
Page 3

As mitigation, funding should be committed to the purchase of APN 2723-001-011, which is 0.17 acres and lies immediately north of Santa Susana Pass Road and adjacent to Corriganville Park. This property is also adjacent to the aforementioned lot proposed as a parking lot. The purchase of this property would assist in the protection of the area as a critical wildlife movement corridor.

If the wildlife bridge is not required, significant funding must be committed to acquire open space between the interchange and Box Canyon Road. Such acquisitions would enhance wildlife movement. More specifically, this funding should be sufficient to complete a contiguous corridor of protected land between the interchange and Box Canyon Road. This corridor would be located south of Santa Susana Pass Road.

Please direct any questions or future correspondence to Paul Edelman of our staff at (310) 589-3200 ext. 128.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BERGER
Chairperson

City of Simi Valley

CITY OF
SIMI VALLEY

2929 Tapo Canyon Road, Simi Valley, CA 93063-2199 • (805) 583-6700 • http://www.simivalley.org

January 11, 2002

Ronald J. Kosinski, Deputy District Director RK
Division of Environmental Planning, Mail Stop 16A
California Department of Transportation
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012-3606
Attention: Cherylann L. Henderson

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF SCOPING/INITIATION OF STUDIES ROCKY PEAK INTERCHANGE WITH STATE ROUTE 118

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

As you are aware, the proposed additions to the existing half-diamond interchange are entirely within the City of Simi Valley. The following comments are offered for your consideration:

- Traffic: Considering the addition of another lane on the inside of the west-bound freeway west of the Rocky Peak Interchange, we assume that Caltrans will provide for safe transition of west-bound on-ramp traffic.

- Santa Susanna Tarplant (*Deinandra minthornii*): This species is present in the general uplands north and south of the pass. The plant is designated as State "Rare" and Federal "Species of Concern." The area of impact should be surveyed for this species.

- Plummer's Mariposa Lily (*Calochortus plummerae*) is present within the Chatsworth Formation. The species is Federally designated as a "Species of Concern." The area of impact should be surveyed for this species. A Spring survey is desirable.

- The trailhead for the Rocky Peak Trail is present on the northwestern side of the freeway interchange. The freeway right of way north of the overpass is used for recreational parking. The project will result in the loss of some parking opportunities and increased bridge traffic, which may conflict with pedestrian and bicycle traffic on the bridge. Since some parking will be shifted to the south side of the interchange and there are no sidewalks on the bridge, the safety of pedestrians should be examined in an environmental document. The addition of a sidewalk and higher guard railings to one side of the bridge may be warranted.

City of Simi Valley

Ronald J. Kosinski, Deputy District Director
Division of Environmental Planning, Mail Stop 16A
California Department of Transportation
Page 2

If the City can be of any assistance to you related to this project, please do not hesitate to contact Deputy Director/Traffic Engineer Ron Fuchiwaki at (805) 583-6808 or Senior Planner Michael Kuhn at (805) 583-6776.

Sincerely,

Al Boughey, Director
Department of Environmental Services

cc: Assistant City Manager, L. Magelnicki
Deputy Director/Traffic Engineer
Senior Planner, M. Kuhn

I\1-02(c)

Southern California Association of Governments

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
ASSOCIATION of GOVERNMENTS

Main Office
818 West Seventh Street
12th Floor
Los Angeles, California
90017-3435

t (213) 236-1800
f (213) 236-1825

www.scag.ca.gov

January 11, 2002

Mr. Ronald J. Kosinski
Deputy District Director
Division of Environmental Planning, Mail Stop 16A
California Department of Transportation, District 7
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012-3606
Attention: Cherylann L. Henderson

RE: **Comments on the Notice of Scoping / Initiation of Studies for the State Highway 118 and Rocky Peak Road Interchange Improvement Project – SCAG No. I 20020007**

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

Thank you for submitting the **Notice of Scoping / Initiation of Studies for the State Highway 118 and Rocky Peak Road Interchange Improvement Project** to SCAG for review and comment. As areawide clearinghouse for regionally significant projects, SCAG reviews the consistency of local plans, projects, and programs with regional plans. This activity is based on SCAG's responsibilities as a regional planning organization pursuant to state and federal laws and regulations. Guidance provided by these reviews is intended to assist local agencies and project sponsors to take actions that contribute to the attainment of regional goals and policies.

In addition, The California Environmental Quality Act requires that EIRs discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and the applicable general plans and **regional plans (Section 15125 [d])**. If there are inconsistencies, an explanation and rationalization for such inconsistencies should be provided.

Policies of SCAG's Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide and Regional Transportation Plan, which may be applicable to your project, are outlined in the attachment. **We expect the environmental document to specifically cite the appropriate SCAG policies and address the manner in which the Project is consistent with applicable core policies or supportive of applicable ancillary policies. Please use our policy numbers to refer to them in your environmental document. Also, we would encourage you to use a side-by-side comparison of SCAG policies with a discussion of the consistency or support of the policy with the Proposed Project.**

Please provide a minimum of 45 days for SCAG to review the environmental document when this document is available. If you have any questions regarding the attached comments, please contact me at (213) 236-1867. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey M. Smith

JEFFREY M. SMITH, AICP
Senior Planner
Intergovernmental Review

Southern California Association of Governments

January 11, 2002

Mr. Ronald J. Kosinski
Deputy District Director
Division of Environmental Planning, Mail Stop 16A
California Department of Transportation, District 7
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012-3606
Attention: Cherylann L. Henderson

RE: **Comments on the Notice of Scoping / Initiation of Studies for the State Highway 118 and Rocky Peak Road Interchange Improvement Project – SCAG No. I 20020007**

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In addition, The California Environmental Quality Act requires that EIRs discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and the applicable general plans and **regional plans (Section 15125 [d])**. If there are inconsistencies, an explanation and rationalization for such inconsistencies should be provided.

Policies of SCAG's Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide and Regional Transportation Plan, which may be applicable to your project, are outlined in the attachment. **We expect the environmental document to specifically cite the appropriate SCAG policies and address the manner in which the Project is consistent with applicable core policies or supportive of applicable ancillary policies. Please use our policy numbers to refer to them in your environmental document. Also, we would encourage you to use a side-by-side comparison of SCAG policies with a discussion of the consistency or support of the policy with the Proposed Project.**

Please provide a minimum of 45 days for SCAG to review the environmental document when this document is available. If you have any questions regarding the attached comments, please contact me at (213) 236-1867. Thank you.

Sincerely,

JEFFREY M. SMITH, AICP
Senior Planner
Intergovernmental Review

Southern California Association of Governments

**COMMENTS ON THE
NOTICE OF SCOPING / INITIATION OF STUDIES
FOR THE
STATE ROUTE 118 / ROCKY PEAK ROAD
INTRECHANGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
SCAG NO. I 20020007**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed Project considers the initiation of studies for improvements to the interchange of State Highway route 118 and Rocky Peak Road in the County of Ventura.

CONSISTENCY WITH REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND GUIDE POLICIES

The **Growth Management Chapter (GMC)** of the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG) contains the following policies that are particularly applicable and should be addressed in the environmental documentation for the State Highway 118 and Rocky Peak Road Interchange Improvement Project.

3.03 *The timing, financing, and location of public facilities, utility systems, and transportation systems shall be used by SCAG to implement the region's growth policies.*

The **Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)** also has goals, objectives, policies and actions pertinent to this proposed project. This RTP links the goal of sustaining mobility with the goals of fostering economic development, enhancing the environment, reducing energy consumption, promoting transportation-friendly development patterns, and encouraging fair and equitable access to residents affected by socio-economic, geographic and commercial limitations. Among the relevant goals, objectives, policies and actions of the RTP are the following:

Core Regional Transportation Plan Policies

4.02 *Transportation investments shall mitigate environmental impacts to an acceptable level.*

4.04 *Transportation Control Measures shall be a priority.*

4.16 *Maintaining and operating the existing transportation system will be a priority over*

Southern California Association of Governments

expanding capacity.

GMC POLICIES RELATED TO THE RCPG GOAL TO IMPROVE THE REGIONAL STANDARD OF LIVING

The Growth Management goals to develop urban forms that enable individuals to spend less income on housing cost, that minimize public and private development costs, and that enable firms to be more competitive, strengthen the regional strategic goal to stimulate the regional economy. The evaluation of the proposed project in relation to the following policies would be intended to guide efforts toward achievement of such goals and does not infer regional interference with local land use powers.

3.10 *Support local jurisdictions' actions to minimize red tape and expedite the permitting process to maintain economic vitality and competitiveness.*

GMC POLICIES RELATED TO THE RCPG GOAL TO IMPROVE THE REGIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE

The Growth Management goals to attain mobility and clean air goals and to develop urban forms that enhance quality of life, that accommodate a diversity of life styles, that preserve open space and natural resources, and that are aesthetically pleasing and preserve the character of communities, enhance the regional strategic goal of maintaining the regional quality of life. The evaluation of the proposed project in relation to the following policies would be intended to provide direction for plan implementation, and does not allude to regional mandates.

3.18 *Encourage planned development in locations least likely to cause environmental impact.*

3.20 *Support the protection of vital resources such as wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, woodlands, production lands, and land containing unique and endangered plants and animals.*

3.21 *Encourage the implementation of measures aimed at the preservation and protection of recorded and unrecorded cultural resources and archaeological sites.*

3.22 *Discourage development, or encourage the use of special design requirements, in areas with steep slopes, high fire, flood, and seismic hazards.*

Southern California Association of Governments

3.23 *Encourage mitigation measures that reduce noise in certain locations, measures aimed at preservation of biological and ecological resources, measures that would reduce exposure to seismic hazards, minimize earthquake damage, and to develop emergency response and recovery plans.*

AIR QUALITY CHAPTER CORE ACTIONS

The **Air Quality Chapter** core actions related to the proposed project includes:

5.07 *Determine specific programs and associated actions needed (e.g., indirect source rules, enhanced use of telecommunications, provision of community based shuttle services, provision of demand management based programs, or vehicle-miles-traveled/emission fees) so that options to command and control regulations can be assessed.*

5.11 *Through the environmental document review process, ensure that plans at all levels of government (regional, air basin, county, subregional and local) consider air quality, land use, transportation and economic relationships to ensure consistency and minimize conflicts.*

CONCLUSIONS

All feasible measures needed to mitigate any potentially negative regional impacts associated with the proposed project should be implemented and monitored, as required by CEQA.

Southern California Association of Governments

January 11, 2002
Mr. Ronald J. Kosinski
Page 5

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Roles and Authorities

THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS (SCAG) is a ***Joint Powers Agency*** established under California Government Code Section 6502 et seq. Under federal and state law, SCAG is designated as a Council of Governments (COG), a Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), and a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). SCAG's mandated roles and responsibilities include the following:

SCAG is designated by the federal government as the Region's ***Metropolitan Planning Organization*** and mandated to maintain a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process resulting in a Regional Transportation Plan and a Regional Transportation Improvement Program pursuant to 23 U.S.C. '134, 49 U.S.C. '5301 et seq., 23 C.F.R. '450, and 49 C.F.R. '613. SCAG is also the designated ***Regional Transportation Planning Agency***, and as such is responsible for both preparation of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) under California Government Code Section 65080 and 65082 respectively.

SCAG is responsible for developing the demographic projections and the integrated land use, housing, employment, and transportation programs, measures, and strategies portions of the ***South Coast Air Quality Management Plan***, pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 40460(b)-(c). SCAG is also designated under 42 U.S.C. '7504(a) as a ***Co-Lead Agency*** for air quality planning for the Central Coast and Southeast Desert Air Basin District.

SCAG is responsible under the Federal Clean Air Act for determining ***Conformity*** of Projects, Plans and Programs to the State Implementation Plan, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. '7506.

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65089.2, SCAG is responsible for ***reviewing all Congestion Management Plans (CMPs) for consistency with regional transportation plans*** required by Section 65080 of the Government Code. SCAG must also evaluate the consistency and compatibility of such programs within the region.

SCAG is the authorized regional agency for ***Inter-Governmental Review*** of Programs proposed for federal financial assistance and direct development activities, pursuant to Presidential Executive Order 12,372 (replacing A-95 Review).

SCAG reviews, pursuant to Public Resources Code Sections 21083 and 21087, Environmental Impacts Reports of projects of regional significance for consistency with regional plans [California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Sections 15206 and 15125(b)].

Pursuant to 33 U.S.C. '1288(a)(2) (Section 208 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act), SCAG is the authorized ***Areawide Waste Treatment Management Planning Agency***.

SCAG is responsible for preparation of the ***Regional Housing Needs Assessment***, pursuant to California Government Code Section 65584(a).

SCAG is responsible (with the Association of Bay Area Governments, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, and the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments) for preparing the ***Southern California Hazardous Waste Management Plan*** pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 25135.3.

Revised July 2001

Ventura County Air Pollution Control District

JAN-11-2002 09:48 RMA PLANNING 805 654 2509 P.03/14

JAN 04 2002

VENTURA COUNTY
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT
Memorandum

TO: Joseph Eisenhut, Planning DATE: January 3, 2002

FROM: Andy Brown AB

SUBJECT: Request for Review of Notice of Scoping/Initiation of Studies for the State Highway Route 118 and Rock Peak Road Interchange Improvements Project, City of Simi Valley (Reference No. 01-109)

Air Pollution Control District staff has reviewed the subject project Notice of Scoping/Initiation of Studies, which is a proposal by Caltrans for improvements to the interchange of State Highway Route 118 and Rocky Peak Road, in the City of Simi Valley.

The proposed project intends to improve traffic operations along State Highway Route 118 in the following ways: Adding an eastbound single lane off-ramp on the west-half of state Route 118 and Rocky Peak Road interchange; Adding a westbound single lane on-ramp on the west-half of State Route 118 and Rock Peak Road interchange; Installing a ramp-meter on the westbound on-ramp.

Based on the information provided to District staff no significant air quality impacts are expected to result from the project. Project grading and construction would result in temporary air pollutant emissions from the use of heavy construction equipment and generation of fugitive dust, however, because these emissions are temporary in nature they would not create a significant impact. The District recommends the following conditions be placed on the permit to help minimize fugitive dust and particulate matter that may result from any grading and construction activities on the site:

1) All clearing, filling, grading, earth moving, or excavation activities shall cease during periods of high winds to prevent excessive amounts of fugitive dust.

2) All trucks that will haul excavated or graded material off site shall comply with State Vehicle Code Section 23114, with special attention to Sections 23114(b)(F), (e)(2) and (e)(4) as amended, regarding the prevention of such material spilling onto public streets and roads.

3) All unpaved on-site roads shall be periodically watered or treated with environmentally-safe dust suppressants to prevent excessive amounts of dust.

Ventura County Public Works Agency

JAN 04 2002

PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
Traffic and Planning & Administration

MEMORANDUM

January 3, 2002

TO: Resource Management Agency, Planning Division
Attention: Joseph Eisenhut

FROM: Nazir Lalani, Principal Engineer

SUBJECT: Review of Document 01-109
Notice of Scoping/Initiation of Studies
Highway 118 Interchange Improvements at Rocky Peak Fire Road
Applicant: Caltrans
Lead Agency: Caltrans

The Transportation Department has reviewed the subject Notice of Scoping/Initiation of Studies for the Highway 118 Interchange Improvements at Rocky Peak Fire Road, as proposed by Caltrans. The proposed project is addition of an eastbound single lane off-ramp on west-half of State Route 118 and Rocky Peak Fire Road interchange, addition of a westbound single lane on-ramp on west-half of State Route 118 and Rocky Peak Fire Road interchange and installing a ramp meter on the westbound ramp. We offer the following comments:

1. We concur with the proposed project for those areas under the purview of the Transportation Department.

2. This project may have the potential to encourage development in the unincorporated area near the interchange. This potential should be evaluated in the Study and Enviromental document.

3. Our review of this project is limited to the impacts this project may have on the County's Regional Road Network.

Please call me at 654-2080 if you have questions.

c: Ray Gutierrez,Jr.

NL-RH-BE-AB:jw
[illegible]\01-109

Firestation 43, Captain Frank McGrath

Cheryl Henderson on 01/31/2002 11:12:59 AM

To: Aaron Burton/D07/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT
cc:

Subject: Re: Proposed Ramps at Rocky Peak Road

Aaron,
This is Frank McGrath, Captain of the Fire Station closes to the project. I talked to you about this. In my notes I gave you, there is a picture of the fire station. This is his response to my request for the need of the project. If there are any questions, give me a call. Cheryl

---------- Forwarded by Cheryl Henderson/D07/Caltrans/CAGov on 01/31/2002 11:09 AM ----------

"Frank McGrath" <Frank.McGrath@mail.co.ventura.ca.us> on 01/30/2002 03:15:48 PM

To Cheryl_Henderson@dot.ca.gov
cc:
Subject: Re: Proposed Ramps at Rocky Peak Road

Cheryl here are some pro's for installing the on and off-ramps at Rocky Peak Rd. When we refer to dramatically we are talking about 15 - 30 minutes depending where the incident was.

* The ramps would dramatically reduce response times to vehicle accidents on the w/b 118 frwy between Rocky Peak and Kuehner.

* Dramatically reduce response times to medical, injury or brush responses to the Rocky Peak Trail, a very popular hiking location.

*Dramatically decrease response times into the Lilac Lane, Mesa Drive and Santa Susanna Pass regimental area's.

*Dramatically reduce response times along the entire section of 118 Frwy in both directions in the event of a incorrect reported location.

*Dramatically improve turn around times for water shuttles in the area during wildland fire.

*Dramatically improve turn around times for Ventura County Fire equipment that have been canceled while responding up the grade into L.A. City/L.A. County Mutual Aid Response Zone.

*Dramatically decrease ambulance transport times to local hospitals.

*Dramatically decrease the response times for responding 2nd & 3rd in responding engine companies.

*Provide a much safer route for responding into the rocky peak area (rather than the Pass road).

*Provide a second access point for the entire area.

Firestation 43, Captain Frank McGrath

*Provide a point to re-direct east bound traffic in the event of a problem between Rocky Peak & Topanga cyn.

*Provide an exit for motorist with overheating or mechanical problems while pulling the east bound grade from Kuehner.

*Environmental impact would be minimal. the area has been graded in the pass, used area has been a storage site for years.

I think it would be of great benefit for all emergency services to construct the off-ramps.

Frank McGrath
Captain, Ventura County Fire Dept.

>>> <Cheryl_Henderson@dot.ca.gov> 01/24/02 07:52AM >>>
Captain McGrath,
Per our phone conversation on January 23, 2002, I am a Associate Environmental Planner preparing the Environmental Document (ED) for the following project:

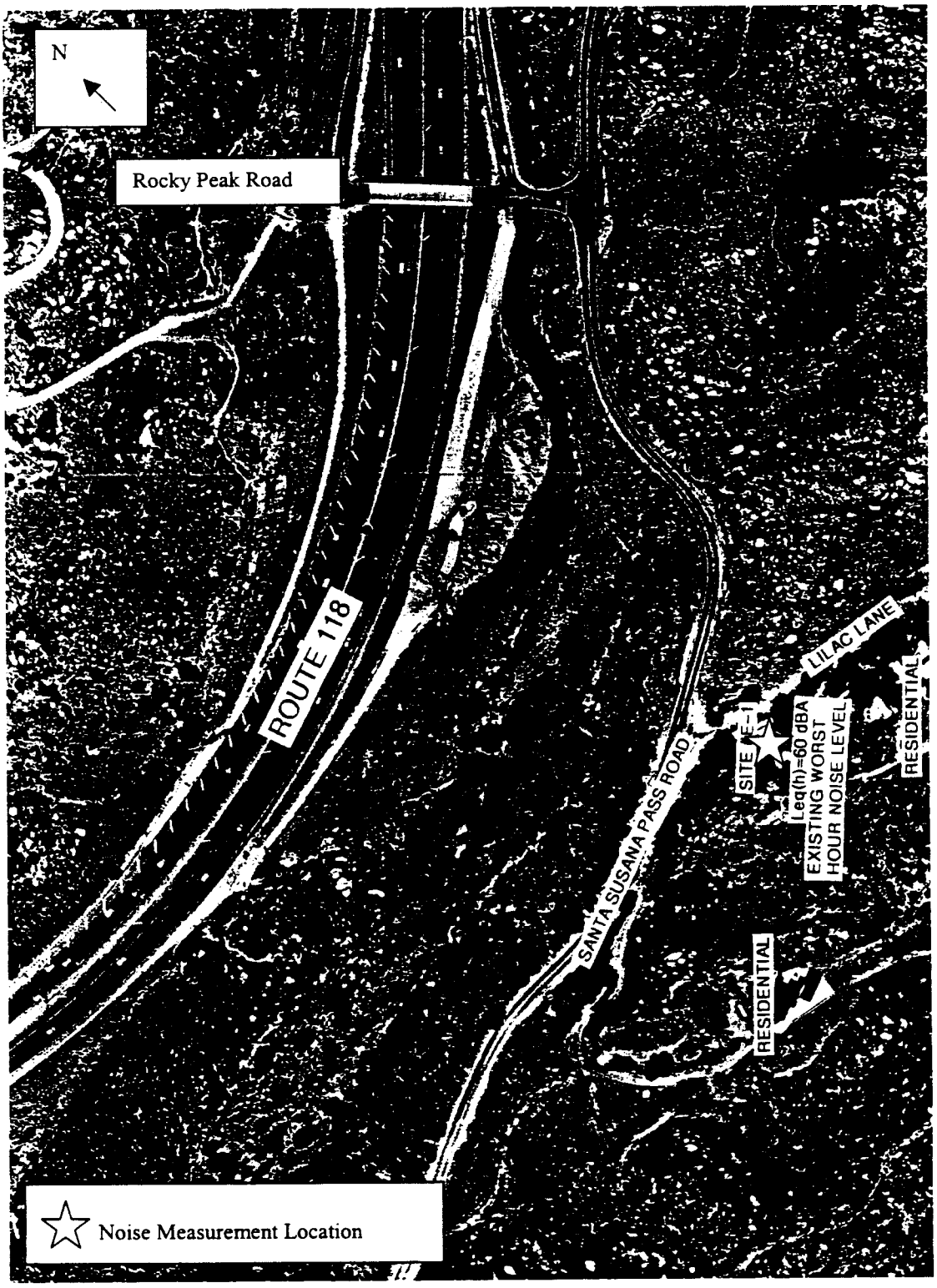
At the request of Ventura County Transportation Committee, Caltrans proposes to construct the eastbound off-ramp and westbound on-ramp for State Route (SR) 118 at Rocky Peak Road Overcrossing. Both ramps will be constructed as a single-lane ramp with the off-ramp transitioning to two lanes at the ramp terminus, and a ramp-meter will be installed on the westbound on-ramp. The proposed ramps would complete the west half interchange of SR 118 and Rocky Peak Road.

The purpose of the project is to provide emergency vehicle access to SR 118. In preparing the ED, I need to justify the need for the project and that is where you come in. In our conversation, you indicated 15 to 20 minutes of additional time needed to respond to an emergency on SR 118. Also, three emergency response units are required for this area. I need this information and anything more in a written format to be included in the ED. You can send it to me by email address or mail it to me at:

Cherylann L. Henderson, Mail Station 1-7A
Division of Environmental Planning
California Department of Transportation
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012-3606

Whatever information you send to me, I appreciate it very much. If there are any questions, you can reach me at 213-897-9095. Thank you for your assistance.
Sincerely,
Cherylann Henderson

Appendix D Noise Measurement Site Map



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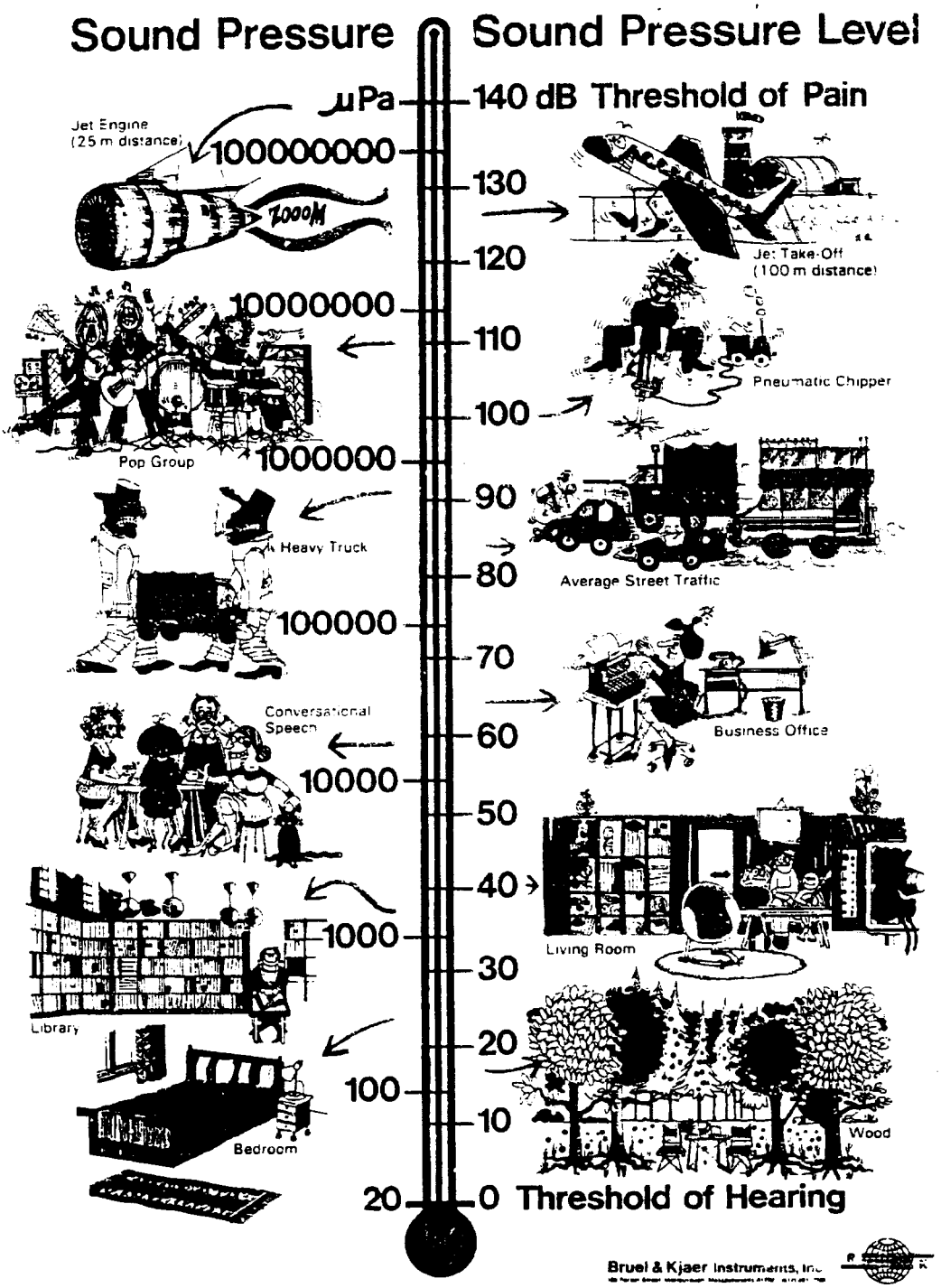
Appendix E Sound Pressure Table



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Appendix F List of Abbreviated Terms

List of Abbreviated Terms

ADL	Aerially Deposited Lead
ADT	Average Daily Traffic
APCD	Air Pollution Control District
APE	Area of Potential Effect
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Data Base
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
dBA	A-weighted decibels
EB	East bound
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Area
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FPPA	Farmland Protection Policy Act
ft	foot/feet
kg	kilogram
km	kilometer(s)
KP	kilometer post
l	liter
LARTS	Los Angeles Regional Transportation Study
LCA	Land Conservation Act
m	meter(s)
mi	mile(s)
ml	milligram
NAC	Noise Abatement Criteria
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPSR	Negative Historical Property Survey Report
OHWM	Ordinary High Water Mark
PM	post mile
RTIP	Regional Transportation Improvement Plan
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
SOAR	Save Our Agricultural Resources
SR	State Route
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
TASAS	Traffic Accident Surveillance and Analysis System
TIP	Transportation Improvement Plan
TNAP	Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol
USACOE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Act
VAQMP	Ventura Air Quality Management Plan
VCTC	Ventura County Transportation Commission
WB	West bound